

DOCTORAL THESIS

Modernising Contemporary Dance and Greece in the mid-1990s

Three case studies from SineQuaNon, Oktana Dancetheatre and Edafos Company

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**Modernising Contemporary Dance and Greece in the mid-1990s:
Three case studies from SineQuaNon, Oktana Dancetheatre and Edafos Company**

by

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for the degree of PhD

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ABSTRACT

The thesis constitutes an examination of contemporary dance in the 1990s in Greece as exemplified in the case of three dance companies - SineQuaNon, Oktana Dancetheatre and Edafos Company – major exponents of the burgeoning dance scene of that time. The focus is on a particular historical moment, the year 1995, and on three choreographies – *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] by Apostolia Papadamaki (SineQuaNon), *Daphnis and Chloe* by Konstantinos Rigos (Oktana Dancetheatre) and *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] by Dimitris Papaioannou (Edafos Company) - as indications of the vitality of contemporary dance of the times which caused major changes in dance policy.

The main hypothesis is that contemporary dance of the 1990s became a site where ideas of change and renewal, pertinent in social milieu became embodied, but at the same time, the companies proposed alternative notions of community, cosmopolitanism and gay identities. The three cases reveal the complex interplay between dance and its social, political and historical context, centering on processes of modernisation of the country and cultural discourses. The thesis explores the emergence of a new generation of artists who negotiated and captured aspects and tensions of the process of modernisation and connected their practices to new artistic identities in accordance with the changing context.

The research has been influenced by recent efforts outside Greece to re-examine dance in its social, historical and economic context and to bring the body into historical and contemporary analyses of culture. This methodology highlights the web of power within which contemporary dance was involved, and following post-structuralist critique of history, examines dance history, not as a linear progressive development but through a re-negotiation of power balances between discourses, bodies and institutions.

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INTRODUCTION

The subject of this thesis is contemporary dance in Greece in the 1990s – a controversial period of ‘dance boom’ – and the aim is to explore aspects of contemporary dance in the country at a specific historical moment in relation to notions of modernisation. The research examines three companies – Edafos Company,¹ Oktana Dancetheatre² and SineQuaNon³ – which are regarded by critics and spectators as major exponents of independent contemporary dance. It focuses on three works as case studies: *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] by Apostolia Papadamaki (SineQuaNon), *Daphnis and Chloe* by Konstantinos Rigos (Oktana Dancetheatre) and *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] by Dimitris Papaioannou (Edafos Company). After the production of these works and in tune with the vitality of the dance field, the Ministry of Culture prompted radical changes in dance funding and the implementation of a new funding scheme (see below pp. 131-134), at the same time when the country was experiencing a major economic crisis.

All three works were produced in a particular year, 1995, which is a point of “‘conjuncture’ of dance and politics” (Franko, 2007a: 12). Conjuncture is understood as more than a mere relation of dance to its context – but as an “articulation, accumulation, or condensation of contradictions” (Grossberg, 2006

¹ Edafos Company is the literal translation of the company’s Greek name *Omada Edafous*. This translation is deliberately used, as it is closer to the original name and avoids confusion with a range of different translations appearing in several texts, such as Edafos Dance Theatre or Edafos Dance. The choreographer of the company is Dimitris Papaioannou.

² Oktana Dancetheatre is the literal translation and grammatical form of the Greek name of the company *Chorotheatro Oktana*, and the research uses this form as it is also used in the company’s promotional material. The choreographer of the company is Konstantinos Rigos.

³ SineQuaNon had four founding members who all individually choreographed works for the company. *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*], the work examined in this thesis, was choreographed by Apostolia Papadamaki.

[online]: 5). Conjuncture involves, in this case, not only, the state dance policy, but also the institutional structures that impact on dance directly, the changing political and social landscape of the country in the context of modernisation, mainly focused on ‘Europeanisation’,⁴ and the discourses of dance in the country.

Unlike the few existing examinations of contemporary dance in Greece which tend to trace developments, common threads or changes over time (see below pp. 19-21 & 23-25), this research focuses on a particular historical moment, aiming to highlight a sense of historical consciousness which places the selected works within their particular conditions of production and reception. Hence, this thesis will provide an in-depth examination of a historical moment when the political and dance “partake different forces of the personal, the artistic, and the institutional” (Franko, 2007a: 13). Moreover, the aim of the thesis is not only to construct a historical narrative for these companies but also to reveal the “operations of social power” and the “ideological underpinnings of aesthetic practices” (Desmond, 1997: 1).

The premise of the thesis is that the choreographies are powerful sites for negotiating notions of change and a locus for identity politics, strongly related to the experience of modernity. Modernity has been conceived as the social and historical conditions which come in contrast to notions of ‘traditional’ or ‘pre-modern’ societies. Classical social theory and thinkers such as Karl Marx (1818-

⁴ ‘Europeanisation’ was primarily an economic process related to the efforts of the country to enter the monetary zone of the Euro. However, the term has several other connotations, which include change, progress, modernisation, and Westernisation. Chapter 3 analyses these concepts in more depth.

1883), Max Weber (1864-1920), or Émile Durkheim (1858-1917) understood societies and their historical transformations in developmental terms, as a movement from traditional to modern societies. Modernity is, thus, conceived in relation to processes of rationalisation, industrialisation, secularisation, urbanisation, individualism, division of labour and state formation. It is closely related to the ideas of European Enlightenment of the 18th century, despite that the feeling of separation between Antiquity and Modern times in historical terms is evident since the Renaissance (Featherstone, 1991: 3; Williams, 1989b: 31). However, modernity's philosophy of progress, rationality and universality has been challenged by philosophers such as Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), Theodor Adorno (1903-1969) and Max Horkheimer (1895-1973), among others. Postmodernist, poststructuralist, postcolonial and feminist thought, also brought to the fore the ideology and problems inherent in modernity, and hence, the notion of modernities arose, which implies multiplicity, hybridity and critique of Western domination and of its strategy of exclusion (Featherstone, Lash and Robertson, eds. 1995).

An important aspect of modernity is related to financial conditions, market capitalism and the economic relationships between actors (Featherstone, 1991: 3; Clifton, 2008 [online]). The focus is on processes of modernisation relevant to economic, political, social and technological change occurring in societies that evolve from traditional to modern forms. In this sense, it is a crucial process in developmental social theories (Featherstone, 1991: 6) even though, those theories have been criticised for being Eurocentric and for ignoring local specificities (for

a detailed examination of the concept in the Greek context see below pp. 107-112).

On the other hand, modernism has been associated with “a whole cultural movement and moment” (Williams, 1989b: 32), at the turn of the 20th century which reached its peak in different moments in different countries. American art critic Clement Greenberg (1909-1994) is regarded as a prominent figure of its theorization. Greenberg suggests that modernist art should make “use of the characteristic methods of a discipline to criticize the discipline itself” in the same way as German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724 – 1804) used the theoretical procedures of logic to establish the limits of logic (Greenberg, 1992 [1961]: 308). Greenbergian modernism shares with modernity the focus on rationality which leads to self-consciousness and reflexiveness of the medium itself, be it art or logic.

Modernism as an artistic movement has been associated with the experience of metropolitan life (Paris, Berlin, Vienna, New York), with alienation, fragmentation, introversion, and flux. Similarly to modernity, artistic modernism shares a sense of change and introversion, which in artistic terms implies a degree of (constantly seeking) subversion and innovation. In particular for modernism in dance, dance scholar Stephanie Jordan notes that “what constitutes modernism in dance has not yet fully developed” (Jordan, 1992: 4) and she further on argues that discussions on post-modernism in dance have tended to refer to modernism as

a concern with abstraction, that is, eliminating any references outside movement and concentrating only in the arts' essential means (Jordan, 1992: 4).⁵

Within this ongoing debate on modernism and modernity, it has been argued that the two concepts do not necessarily conflate (Wolff, 1990: 57), but they, rather, have a complex and conflicted relationship (Huysen, 2006 [online]: 1). Dance scholar Ramsay Burt proposes a relationship between modernism and modernity according to which modernism is not a direct aesthetic expression of the idea of progress (modernity). Instead, Burt conceives modernism as a progressive deconstruction of outmoded aesthetic conventions and traditions, that is, an abandonment of conventions which are not valid anymore, and consequently, innovation comes as a result of this deconstruction (Burt, 1998: 12).

Following Burt in his idea to shift the interest from the notion of progress to the relationship with the past against which this progress can be conceived, my own approach suggests that “new dance” in Greece in the 1990s shared with modernisation processes a similar cultural sensibility, that of change as a particular relationship to the past. Unlike him however, this relationship is not conceived as a deconstruction of parochial elements but as a fulfillment of

⁵ Dance scholar Sally Banes in her seminal book *Terpsichore in Sneakers* (1987 [1977]) discerns between analytic and metaphoric post-modern dance, and she stresses that analytic post-modern dance actually operates as modernist art. For Banes, modernism in dance is not only concerned with movement and movement design in space for its own sake, but it is also reflexive. That means that the structure of the dance and the perception of the audience are actively framed in order to reveal the “conditions of the performance” (Banes, 1987: xxii). Susan Manning, in her response to Banes argues for postmodernism as a general cultural category. For her, modernism in dance encompasses two conditions, the “reflexive rationalization of movement and the dual practice of ballet and modern dance” (Manning, 1988 [online]: 35). Accordingly, postmodernism, for Manning, is defined against these two conditions. It is however debatable if the whole oeuvre of a choreographer can be labeled under one heading. Frank Werner (1999: 16-21) and André Lepecki (1999: 26-29), have suggested that each work proposes anew its own rules, and that “while a single artistic work can be termed, for example, predominantly postmodern, an artist or his oeuvre cannot be categorized in this way” (Werner, 1999: 18).

concealed needs that have been neglected in the past (see below pp. 47-48). These forces of fulfillment, then, become the historical conditions for moving into the future.

What is important in this proposition is the philosophical concept of modernism as a “practical historical schema”, a specific temporal logic of negation (the new) (Osborne, 2000: 58). In other words, modernism is the logic of negating the past and being oriented towards the future. It is a form of perceiving historical time and acting on the present. According to Osborne, this philosophical concept is transformed into practice in several contexts, and thus, modernism has a history of translations in specific cultural forms. In particular, the concept of modernism takes its particular meanings through specific negotiations in different historical and geographical contexts and hence different ‘modernisms’ emerge (Osborne, 2000: 59), allowing for an examination of the term in the case of Greece.

Greece, since the 1980s was politically, economically and socially orientated towards a new identity and in search for a place within a contemporary Europe. Through the three companies, this thesis narrates the emergence of a new generation of artists who negotiated and captured aspects and tensions of this process and related their names with dance’s modernisation in this changing artistic, social and historical context. It is exactly this convergence of dancing bodies, cultural discourses and processes of modernisation that the research explores. Moreover, the major strategies of the companies examined in the thesis were those of exclusion (of selective aspects of ballet, modern dance techniques, and the dance tradition that pre-exists in the country) and inclusion through

transformation (influences from other arts, new dance techniques), and their aim was to create a 'new' dance capable of capturing contemporary needs and conditions.

For the artists, the works were a means of expression and for their audience they were sources of aesthetic experience. The nature of the works is therefore important. Edafos Company used a choreographic language based on visual elements, while Oktana Dancetheatre stressed the tactile (material) presence of bodies on stage and the psychological depth of the characters. SineQuaNon, through its movement vocabulary, energy and movement dynamics, foregrounded the kinesthetic dimension of dance.

The three companies created different artistic identities and proposed different theatrical experiences for their audiences. The decision to focus on all three is based on these differences which are regarded not only as a matter of different dance styles, but also as models for experiencing the historical moment of modernisation.

For example, *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] by Edafos Company made reference to drawings by the Greek painter Yannis Tsarouchis (1910–1989) as being an inspiration to the work. The choreography explored issues of gay identities and the AIDS epidemic, and it thus activated a gay sensibility that existed in some Greek artists, as it deployed an experience of visual and visceral affect.

Daphnis and Chloe by Oktana Dancetheatre presented three different personae of the heroine in different ages, proposing multiple identities on stage through different dancing bodies, in a critical re-reading of an ancient theme. By using particular stage devices (such as proximity and nudity) the work reinforced a sense of the complexity and the fragility of human experience, while provoking controversy for using nudity on stage. At the same time the work was set in the context of the international practice of re-approaching an older work. It, thus, posed a critique of dominant perspectives on exploring a Greek theme by a Greek artist.

ProsOlotoixos [Tour de Force] by SineQuaNon explored movement and physical risks, stressing the experience of speed and acceleration as embodiment of force, which can imaginatively suggest the notion of change. In addition, their practices, on and off stage, proposed an encounter with the audience and suggested the possibility of creating communities.

This research examines the particular works on the premise that:

- They were produced after a major increase in dance funding and, in addition, they have contributed to changes in dance policy.⁶ In this perspective, the three choreographies were produced under unprecedented favourable material conditions for dance. They are, then, among the first examples of a direct interplay between State dance policy and dance creation. This interplay is still operating, despite changes in philosophy and criteria. The systematic State funding for dance was established in the mid-1990s and it is still active,

⁶ Dance funding was allocated at the end of the season. Thus, the works of each season were valued and judged and then funds were allocated playing the role of reward.

indicating that the period was crucial for the institutional, and especially the State's, relationship with dance.

- A major dance policy reform began in 1995, which, however, gradually stopped due to political changes and different priorities. Consequently, 1995 is a 'special case' for dance history and dance policy in the country and has not been examined yet from the dance's perspective.⁷
- They represent three different stages of artistic development: SineQuaNon was a company that had just entered the dance field, Oktana Dancetheatre was an emerging company and Edafos Company was an established dance group. At the same time, these works led the companies to be supported in different degrees by the funding system: one year funding, three-year funding, and the top rate of the three-year fund, respectively (see Appendix 2). Finally, all these factors have consequences for the companies' artistic choices, their visibility and status in the dance field and the created expectations, issues unexplored by now.
- An examination of the particular works is absent from existing literature on dance (see below pp 20-29); an absence which is in contrast with the public visibility of dance in the 1995 season.
- They exemplify ways of reconfiguring bodily behaviors, as they are prescribed by theatrical, state and social apparatuses, playing between provocation and affirmation.
- Finally, the three companies were active for many years, unlike other companies that have ceased their activities.

⁷ These cultural initiatives have been examined from the perspectives of policy administration and cultural management (Konsola, 2006; Skia-Panopoulou, 2008).

The choreographies examined in the thesis were not commissions, as were other works created by the companies in 1995, and in this sense, they were clearly dependent (without ignoring that other forces were also implicated) on the artistic choice of the creators. *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] by SineQuaNon exemplifies the fascination of a young company with movement exploration, stemming from their studies in New York, as opposed to the aesthetic of dance theatre. *Daphnis and Chloe* by Oktana Dancetheatre foregrounds Rigos's continuing interest in historical dance works and music masterpieces, started earlier in his career and is relevant to the company's strategy of audience development. *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] by Edafos Company explores sensitive social issues, such as AIDS and homosexuality, within the context of the company's enhanced reputation after the production of *Midia* [*Medea*] - the most acclaimed dance work of the 1990s - and Papaioannou's personal politics.

In addition, the material conditions of productions were relevant to the stage of development and status of the companies, and this allows for sketching the diversity of the field and the differences in producing dance performances in the mid-1990s. Consequently, the analyses of these works allow for examining the interplay of different forces (artistic, social, and political) within a rationale which brings together the choreographer (among others) as agent of action and the context, which is a crucial theoretical argument of the thesis (see below pp. 45-54).

The research is situated within critical dance studies which examine dance as a social and cultural practice with ideological underpinnings. In particular, it refers to that dance scholarship which has shown how modern dance is an important aspect of national discourses (Manning, 1993; Burt, 1998; Franko, 1995; Daly, 1995) and that scholarship which has exemplified how dancing bodies negotiate identities (Foulkes, 2002; Tomko, 1999; Franko, 2002; Prickett, 2002; Gitelman & Martin, 2007). Furthermore, it draws on dance ethnographies which analyse dance in familiar settings (home ethnography) (Koutsouba, 1997, 1999; Buckland, 2001 [online]; Novack, 1990), and finally on theories of the body, which examine embodied individuals in specific socio-historical conditions (Shilling, 1993; Featherstone, 1982 [online]; Featherstone, Hepworth and Turner, eds. 1991; Elias, 1986, 1994 [1939]).

As cultural critique has shifted its attention to ethnicity, race, class, and gender, the dance academy and scholars have turned to socio-cultural issues, blurring the boundaries between the sub-fields of dance. Hence, the relation of dance or movement to culture and power is explored from different theoretical perspectives: cultural studies in dance, dance ethnology, dance anthropology, and performance studies, among others.

This research has its origins in my personal admiration for these companies and their work, based on my own experiences as a member of their audience. A sense of enjoyment, engagement and appreciation is strong in these memories, sentiments which other spectators may also share. However, the research has been re-shaped by the knowledge I have gained since then and the critical framework

within which I place my own involvement in the research (see below pp. 60-61). In addition, the research is situated within the confines that “choreographers, dancers, viewers...and those who write about dance...are socially and historically placed individuals who operate according to socio-cultural conventions and aesthetic systems” (Kaepler, 2000 [online]: 116), and this reflexivity applies also to the researcher who examines such formations.

Furthermore, the dance history of Greece is an important context which frames the research. Dance in Greece until the 1980s was mainly connected to theatre and ancient drama or a few independent dance companies, such as Elliniko Chorodrama [Hellenic Dancedrama]⁸ and the Peiramatiko Mpalleto Athinon [Experimental Ballet Company of Athens].⁹ During the 1980s, independent contemporary dance started to become visible in the public sphere, and the Contemporary Dance Company of Haris Mandafounis¹⁰ was its major exponent.

By the late 1980s, contemporary dance had been constituted gradually as a scene, characterised by the increasing number of companies and artists, changes in dance education, inclusion of new dance techniques, mobility of dancers and

⁸ Elliniko Chorodrama [Hellenic Dancedrama] (1951–1988) was founded by Rallou Manou and it was the first professional contemporary dance company. Graham technique was the base of the company’s movement style and its repertoire was mainly inspired by ancient themes or folk stories. It was also the nucleus of an important artistic community of painters, directors and composers (Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004; Bourneli, 2008 [online]: 55-75, see also below pp. 73-78).

⁹ Peiramatiko Mpalleto Athinon [Experimental Ballet Company of Athens] was active from 1965 to 1990. Its repertoire included divertissements from classical works, such as *Coppélia*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *La Fille Mal Gardée*, but also new choreographies by Giannis Metsis, one of its co-founders, and invited choreographers. The company was praised for commissioning music scores by contemporary Greek composers and for creating the first neoclassical choreographies in Greece (Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004: 296–305, see also below footnote 23 on pages 86-87).

¹⁰ Contemporary Dance Company of Haris Mandafounis (founded in 1980) was the first contemporary company which performed extensively around the country and initiated audiences to contemporary dance. The company was praised for the physicality and musicality of its performances, and the technical competence of its dancers (Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004: 278–283, see also below pp. 81-82 and footnote 18 on p. 81).

choreographers to study abroad, alternative venues for presenting dance, and changes in the material conditions of dance production. The three companies are examples of this 'new dance' movement that emerged in the late 1980s, which constructed its identity by stressing a contrast to both ballet and the modern dance of the past.

In this sense, the artists built their artistic identity on a historical rupture with the dance history of the country, on the 'ahistorical' birth of their new dance forms. In this process, new subject matter, different body techniques and a range of idiosyncratic choreographic languages were employed (Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004; Vounelaki, 1996a: 57; Hassiotis, 2004: 26-27), helping the practitioners to construct artistic identities based on differences rather than similarities. Artistic idiosyncrasy was proposed as an antidote to a past vision of unified culture, and as a marketing strategy within a field characterised by increased competition. The dance world was in a process of transformation and the tension between newcomers and established artists, as well as between the newcomers themselves and the available resources, makes the period a particularly interesting example of the interaction between dance and its context.

1995 is a year marked by the attempts of the state and the cultural elite to create organisational forms and institutionalise dance and hence to create a dominant dance culture (changes in dance policy, awards and commission of works). At the same time, the political and social context of 1995 was dominated by political unrest, economic instability and a phenomenon which several authors have named 'the end of metapolitefsi' [the end of political changeover], meaning the end of

the period of restoration of democracy. This social phenomenon began in the middle of the 1980s and continued into the 1990s, indicating a complex political, economic and cultural transformation of society, which is marked, according to political and social scientists, by a shift to individualism, an increased intervention by the media and commercial industries in the cultural sector, and the diffusion of power and social control to a diversity of centres other than the State (Voulgaris, 2008: 90; Sevastakis, 2004: 12) (see below pp. 107-113).

Notions such as individuality, innovation and expression became embodied in the work of some artists, and these notions dominated artistic and cultural discourses. Furthermore, issues of gender representation became crucial as gender roles were questioned on and off stage, in relation to positions of power (as between choreographers and dancers), and under the pressures of consumer culture which reinforced traditional gender exploitation.

Even though the notion of ‘dance boom’ is contested (Sussmann, 1984 [online]: 23–28), it is used here as a term indicating a sense of expansion in dance practices and their increased impact on the public sphere. There is controversy about the period, for some dance critics optimistically argue “the unquestionable booming of modern dance in Greece” (Vounelaki, 1996a: 57). Others, in retrospect, are skeptical about the notion of dance boom: “Is dance actually thriving? What had changed in dance that can be justified with this term?” (Hassiotis, 2001b [online]).¹¹ All of them, however, point to the significance of the 1990s in terms of changes that occurred in dance practice and dance meanings.

¹¹ All quotations from Greek sources are included in Appendix 7 in Greek language.

The three companies belong to a new establishment, meaning they are dance companies supported by official policy, in contrast to other companies outside the funding system. According to this line of thought, the emergence of a new generation of artists supported by the system of public funding and media promotion has contributed to the creation of a new canon.¹² Even though it is important for works both inside and outside the canon to be examined, this research has a different task. It examines works produced at this particular moment of conjuncture of dance and politics, to question the idea that the establishment is homogenous and to reveal contrasts and tensions not only between the companies, but also within a single work. In this way, the artistic identities of the companies are revealed as complex and often contradictory processes which involve a range of factors, such as the diverse backgrounds of choreographers and dancers, the companies' trajectories and the different stages of development.

The research explores the works as meaningful social practices, and most importantly, as embodied social practices and as negotiations of embodied meanings in relation to the changing conditions (institutional, economic, political) of the mid-1990s. Jane Desmond defines the embodied as lived through the body; the social as the specific material and ideological conditions of possibility within which dance is situated; and practice as an articulation and materialisation of meanings and relationships (Desmond, 2001: 13). In other words, dance is examined as a meaningful practice experienced through the body, which is

¹² The notion of canon here is used as a conceptual formation for the well known and acclaimed. It does not have the meaning of a set of works performed regularly, since the practice of repertory works does not exist.

produced and interpreted within specific social conditions, and in this case, involved the exploration of new subjectivities in relation to the tension between the individual and a sense of belonging to an (imagined) community; the exploration of distinctions between high art and spectacle; the representation of gender; and the notion of history as both an experience of the present moment and a perspective on the past. All of these issues will be explored further in Chapters 4 to 6.

In Chapter 1 the focus is on positioning this thesis in relation to the existing literature and sources on contemporary Greek dance and to provide the theoretical and methodological frameworks applied to the research. Chapter 1.1 reviews the existing Greek literature on contemporary dance relevant to the three companies. Sections 1.2 and 1.3 deal with the sources of the research, while sections 1.4 and 1.5 discuss the theoretical frameworks, the key concepts and the methodology of the research.

Chapter 2 provides a historical overview of contemporary dance in Greece. The chapter investigates the past, seeking to reveal traces of the discourses of power which formed conventions of dance and produced specific dancing bodies. It focuses in particular on three historical periods: the early 20th century and the inter-wars years (section 2.2.1), the post-war years (section 2.2.2) and the post-dictatorship era (section 2.2.3). Within these historical traces the ‘new dance wave’ is examined as proposing sites for constructing artistic identities which played both within and against those conventions. Section 2.3 interrogates the

main discourses surrounding dance in the 1990s, which reveal the issues and concepts within which the dance works examined in chapters 4-6 were placed.

Chapter 3 examines the institutional context, with a focus on cultural policy in general, and dance funding in particular, on dance infrastructure and available resources. Moreover, socio-political, cultural and ideological issues are examined as aspects of the wider picture within which dance operates. Finally, the chapter explores the institutions and resources supporting dance in the early 1990s, indicating the vitality of the field.

Chapters 4 to 6 focus on the three companies and their works. Each examination follows a similar path starting with the company's history and background information. It then proceeds to an investigation of the dance practices of each company, and looks at information about the specific works and their institutional context. Each particular choreography is examined through a variety of primary sources and my own viewings of the recorded works. Finally, Chapter 7 presents the conclusions from the research. The three companies provide a range of embodiments and subjectivities which foreground the implication of dance and its context. A binary logic between conformism and change, or provocation and affirmation, is elusive, for the choreographies reveal complex layers of negotiations and tend to avoid absolute categorisation.

It is hoped that the research will contribute to the international research on dance in the 1990s and that it will enrich the knowledge about contemporary dance in Greece in particular. Furthermore, it is hoped that the research will contribute to

the discourses on culture, the arts, politics and history, providing a fruitful analysis of the relationship between dance and its socio-historical context. Finally, since the research is looking at contemporary dance in Greece, a ‘terra incognita’ for many people, it highlights the margins of international dance history, as well as the reluctance of local discourse and dance practice to engage itself in critical practice and theory

CHAPTER 1

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

1.1. Review of Greek literature

In terms of literature on contemporary dance in Greece, international scholarship does not include the country's practice, and the Greek bibliography on contemporary dance is very limited. The scarcity of academic dance research in the country has affected the way dance has been examined, and hence, the Greek dance literature consists mainly of a number of autobiographies and biographies of artists, none of which are on the artists examined in this research. There are, however, three books relevant to the examined companies, although two of them are not directly related to the topic of this research. These are: Choros kai theatro [Dance and Theatre] (Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004), Choros [Dance] (Greek Choreographers Association, 2004) and Chorotheatro Oktana – 10 chronia [Oktana Dancetheatre – 10 years] (Oktana Dancetheatre, 2000).

The first, Choros kai theatro [Dance and Theatre] is the result of a four-year research project, conducted by the Theatre Department of the University of Athens. It is mainly a collection of biographical information for, and lists of works by, all the artists and companies that have worked in theatrical dance in Greece since the beginning of the 20th century. Part of the included information has been gathered by interviewing the artists, and direct quotations from these interviews appear in the text. The rest of the material comes from the artists' personal archives and institutions, such as the Theatre Museum. The rationale of

the book is to expose the interdependence of dance and theatre, regardless of style or genre. Consequently, the book refers to a great number of artists and it covers a diverse range of styles and genres, from ballet and contemporary dance artists to choreographers for theatre musicals and ancient drama, all represented in alphabetical order.

The book's subtitle 'From Duncan to the new dance companies' makes an implicit reference to contemporary dance. However, the book includes artists from many different dance forms, such as contemporary dance, music theatre, ballet, or choreographers for theatre plays. This lack of clarity can be explained by confusion about the different histories of dance in Greece, since these histories have not been thoroughly examined by dance scholars.

The introduction of the book, written by Helen Fessa-Emmanouel,¹ is a condensed chronological presentation of dance history in Greece from the early to late 20th century. This text is the first academic attempt to examine the history of dance in the country, and hence it is of great importance. It is based on an implicit evolutionary logic of history, meaning a narration of progressive changes and individual creators, with all changes leading to dance's autonomy (Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004: 31–32). This kind of modernist approach to history (Franko, 2007a: 171) dominates traditional historical examination of dance not only in Greece but in international literature. The problem with such an approach is its hidden ideological agenda which allows the construction of history based on a

¹ Helen Fessa-Emmanuel is Associate Professor in the Theatre Department at the University of Athens.

romantic notion of the artist, and an evolutionary logic of progress from a devalued past to a better future.

However, the book provides useful general information on artists and their views. Most importantly, the book contributes to my research, as primary source material, for it is part of the public discourse on dance which the research explores. In particular, the connection between dance and theatre is one of the dominant frameworks within which dance has been perceived and examined in the country. This perspective sees dance not for its own merit, but in relation to other arts, and especially theatre. This is not only because choreographers often choreograph for theatrical productions, but also because the academic discipline and discourse of theatre tends to dominate the examination of every art which uses the theatrical apparatus, including dance. It is then apparent that disciplinary discourses are imbued with issues of power and that dance practices are interwoven into these discourses (see also below p. 69).

Choros [Dance] (2004) is a book published by the Association of Greek Choreographers for promotional reasons, and it includes the companies whose choreographers are members of the Association. Its content consists of listings of productions of each company, places of presentation, castings, photographic material and a DVD with promotional clips from each company. The sources of the publication have been provided by the companies and the material comes from their archives. As such, it examines the companies through their lens and how they present themselves. For that reason, it is interesting in terms of information included or excluded, and the possible relationships between the companies.

The last book, Chorotheatro Oktana – 10 chronia [Oktana Dancetheatre – 10 years] (2000), is a photographic album, published by the company as a tribute to its first decade. The book includes an extensive list of choreographies, casting, places of presentation, and production credits, as well as rich photographic material, and hence it is an invaluable primary source. Most importantly, however, it includes two short essays, one on the company's choreographic work written by dance critic Natasha Hassiotis, and the second, on the use and selection of music written by dance critic Andreas Rikakis. These two texts are the first attempt to articulate a context for examining the company's work.

Dance history has shown that:

before the advent of university-based scholarly discipline, the works of critics performed the double operation of evaluating an individual performance and establishing the conceptual boundaries for what constituted the art form.

Martin, 2007: 2

Under this scope, these texts are extremely fruitful for sketching concepts within which the company in particular, and dance in general, is examined. While the texts reveal aspects of how their authors approach the company and its work, they can also be treated as indications of how the company wants to construct its own identity.

In general, all three books provide helpful factual information and, in addition, reveal important issues relevant to ideas about dance, history, and dance practices, but they do, however, lack theoretical perspective. None of them explicitly employs a theoretical framework nor makes reference to other dance research, in

order to situate the authors' perspective and knowledge within international discourses. As a consequence, their critical perspective is limited, and they do not clearly articulate an argument.

Academic research on contemporary dance in Greece consists of a few studies at undergraduate level, and even fewer at postgraduate and PhD level.² The only PhD thesis relevant to this examination is by Ioanna Tzartzani (2007), which explores dance in relation to nationalism and globalisation, focusing on the opening and closing ceremonies of the 2004 Olympic Games. The director of the ceremonies was Dimitris Papaioannou, co-founder and choreographer of Edafos Company, and this provides the link for Tzartzani to approach the history of contemporary dance in Greece since the 1920s. The 2004 Olympic Games was a historical moment of great importance for the presentation of the nation, as Athens was hosting the games, and the Olympic Ceremonies tend to represent an image of the hosting country and its culture, especially as Greece is the birthplace of the Games.

In her thesis, Tzartzani identifies three strategies for national representation in the Ceremonies, namely historicisation, folklorisation, and universalisation, which she then suggests are threads running through the whole history of dance in Greece. According to Tzartzani, historicisation forms the foundation of an official national narrative; folklorisation is a means of mediating between ancient and contemporary national identity, and hence forwarding the past into the present;

² All postgraduate and PhD research has been conducted at educational institutions abroad, due to lack of Dance Departments in Greek Universities, and the difficulty inherent in pursuing dance research in other academic departments.

and universalisation is defined as a strategy of nation(alism) to promote the local and as a conveyor of modernity (Tzartzani, 2007: 30).

Tzartzani's research is the first PhD which seeks to revise the historical narrative of contemporary dance in the country, by relating artistic practices to socio-political and ideological issues. Its main emphasis is on issues of constructing the neo-Hellenic identity, as it is exemplified in a detailed examination of the Olympic Ceremonies. Tzartzani's approach to the history of dance in the country is based on the above mentioned threads, which according to her argument form a referential ground for all choreographers. In this sense, I suggest that she perpetuates the grand narrative of a 'nationalist' account of history through a new perspective, that is, instead of following a national(istic) perspective as dominant and 'natural', she critically examines it. But again, she is trapped in the same nationalist discourses she fought to criticise.

For, Tzartzani's examination of past works is based on elements such as the themes of the works, without proceeding in further analysis of the works themselves. Her exploration then overstresses the power of national discourse, subsuming, in different degrees, all choreographers and all their works under a national rhetoric. My research challenges Tzartzani's thesis at this point, arguing that every work embodies a much more complex set of ideas and power relations, not easily considered under one heading.

Asimina Ioannides (2001) in her MA dissertation examines Greek dance under the prism of postmodernism, as it has been discussed in dance by Sally Banes, and in

philosophy by Jean-François Lyotard, Jacques Derrida and Jean Baudrillard. In particular, she analyses three companies, Edafos Company, Kiniteras Dancetheama and Elaterio Dance Company,³ aiming at revealing important features of the companies' styles which are relevant to postmodernism, such as the crossing of boundaries between high and popular art, the interdisciplinary means in performance, and new relationships between audience and art.

Considering postmodernism as an international phenomenon, Ioannides investigates and speculates about the extent to which "each company adopts a 'global' style" and, hence, can be 'contemporary', and to "what extent it remains anchored in Greek culture and mentality" (2001: 1). She does not, however, clarify either the concept of 'Greek culture' and its meanings or the relation between the Greek context, the companies and their work.

Ioannides makes reference to several works of the companies, and in relation to Edafos Company she identifies an interdisciplinary attitude towards performance based on the visual arts background of the choreographer; his eclectic use of historical reference; the use of sets, bodies and costumes as symbols; the use of minimalism; and filmic techniques as means of manipulating the movement material. She provides an interesting analysis of the companies' work, which, however, remains within an examination of postmodernism as an aesthetic style without exploring possible socio-cultural resonances.

³ Kiniteras Dancetheama and Elaterio Dance Company are two contemporary dance companies founded in 1994 and 1999 respectively, by Laban Centre's (London) graduates. Kiniteras is an interdisciplinary (dancers and actors) dance-theatre company and its works make references to popular culture, everyday life and the ordinary, while Elaterio's work focuses on movement and physicality.

Panagiota Panagiotara (2006) in her MA dissertation investigates SineQuaNon's works. Based on Michel Foucault's concept of 'conditions of possibility', her aim is to elucidate the company's success. She examines choreographies presented after 1996, setting the company's practice and artistic philosophy within its socio-historical context. Following Foucault, her aim is not to provide causal explanations but to outline a network of artistic practice and contextual facts.

According to Panagiotara, SineQuaNon challenged dominant notions regarding not only dance itself but also the organising structure of a company. Its collective and participatory model of choreography revealed a democratic structure that favoured polyphony. The company's improvisational choreographic practice further supported its democratic and pluralistic structure. Unlike my own research, Panagiotara's research stresses a harmonious relationship of conditions and works, without scrutinizing possible conflicts, and without examining *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*], the work analysed here.

Foucault's interest in the 'conditions of possibility' is radically different from a conception of history as a progressive process based on causation. Instead he focuses on the rules enabling the constitution of knowledge in the first place. Foucault's concept delineates the limits of possibilities for episteme to be constituted in a given time and place, but also allows opposing concepts or theories to coexist (Foucault, 2002 [1966]). Foucault's approach has been elaborated and applied to dance by Linda Tomko in her examination of dance practices in America at the beginning of 20th century, placing dance practices of the times within the contexts of developments in Progressive-era activism,

immigration flows, architecture and women's rights (Tomko, 1999: xvi; Tomko, 2004: 80-93).

Tomko's theoretical perspective reveals the complexity of factors involving in examining dance rather than a single-minded causation. My research draws on this methodological perspective by approaching the examination of dance within a web of forces and power relationships expressed in a variety of institutional, artistic or social actions, which cannot be explained in a logic of progressive development but interact in constant negotiation (see below pp. 44-48). This sympathy with a Foucauldian approach highlights a certain affinity between this research and Panagotiara's work

Finally, Despina Psalli (2006) investigates the notion of corporeality in the Opening Ceremony of the 2004 Olympic Games in her MA dissertation. She explores how corporeality was used in terms of meanings, symbolism and allegories. This is the first examination which focuses on the body and the ideas that it can generate from the spectators' point of view.

Like my research, Psalli focuses her examination on a particular work, even though the Olympic Ceremony differs in scope and volume from a dance performance. She identifies ideas referring to Ancient Greece, national identity and gender representations, which in the context and aim of the Ceremony had greatly affected the use and interpretations of corporeality. Even though some of these issues, such as allegory and gender, can be seen in other works of the Edafos

Company, the context of presentation differs due to its international audience and the demands of presenting a national character.

Considering that Panagiotara's and Ioannides' dissertations explore two of the companies of this research, it is important to notice their attempt to formulate a method for investigating the companies and their work in relation to a notion of context, socio-historical in the first case (Panagiotara) and stylistic in the second (Ioannides). Both writers speculate about a sense of connection between the companies and their time, and a reflection on those particular conditions. It is this contention that my research continues to be based upon, exploring interventions of dancing bodies and particular socio-historical conditions and discourses.

1.2. Primary Sources

The research draws on variety of sources which, for methodological reasons, are divided into primary and secondary ones. The categorisation of sources as primary and secondary is problematic and may shift according to the methodological framework and questions posed by the researcher (Layson, 1994 [1983]: 21; Gore, 1994: 63–64). In this research, primary sources are those directly related to the companies and their work, regardless of their location (archive) or period of creation (contemporary to the events or a posteriori). Secondary sources are those relevant to methodological or conceptual frameworks of the research, such as sociological, historical or anthropological explorations of dance and Greece (see sections 1.1 and 1.3 of this thesis on pp. 19 – 28 and pp. 38 – 43 respectively).

Hence, all archival material (written, aural and oral), interviews conducted for the research, videos and DVDs, photographs, books and magazines on Greek dance are regarded as first-hand sources and form the raw material of the study. There is often a tendency to perceive the material coming from the artists as having an authority and authenticity that other sources lack. The specific way primary and secondary sources are categorised in this study shifts such preoccupations and critically examines all sources as equally important. This is not to credit one speaking subject over any other, but to employ a strategy of reflection on the specific power positions from which each subject speaks.

A further distinction should be made between two different types of source used in this research: those that pre-existed the research and those constructed during the research. The pre-existing sources include written, audio and aural material (video recordings of the works, reviews, press clippings, photographs, interviews, television programmes), coming from different archives. The sources constructed during the research are a series of semi-structured interviews with dancers, choreographers and critics, my own notes during that period, many unofficial conversations with a variety of practitioners, and my own notes from viewing the video recordings of the works.

A major preoccupation is to ensure that I and the artists are not reconstructing the past simply to fit present perspectives. For that reason, the new material (interviews, my notes) is examined alongside the documents of the period to bring to the surface contradictions and convergences.

1.2.1. Archives and archival material

An important number of sources come from the companies' archives (programmes, photographs, reviews, videos and articles). As a locus of preservation, the archive has gained increased importance in debates on issues of preservation, reconstruction and authenticity (Kant, 2004: 107–118; Hammergren, 2004: 20–31; Jordan, ed., 2000) but also in examinations of the body as archive (Taylor, 2003).

The traditional role of the archive as the place of preservation of important and true traces of a past, which the researcher can approach, has been challenged. Lena Hammergren argues that “an object is imbued with patterns of meanings already in the act of becoming a document...when it is included in an archive” (Hammergren, 2004: 22). That is, the sources included in an archive automatically acquire credibility and power as indications of a ‘true’ past, which other, neglected and excluded sources lack. However, feminist, postcolonial and postmodernist critique has shown that in this way history is always only one particular version of history, which, through its selection of sources, prioritises specific events and processes to the exclusion of others.

Specifically the archive of a company reveals not only how the company (or its choreographer) decides to preserve the identity of the company, but also indicates the focus of this preservation. For example, Edafos Company's archive holds many newspaper clippings and reviews indicating an interest in press coverage while Oktana Dancetheatre has a large collection of clippings from lifestyle

magazines, which reveals the choreographer's affection for popular culture, and the extensive coverage of Oktana and dance in general in the popular press. Finally, SineQuaNon has a very limited amount of material, due to the company's disbandment in 2001.

All sources in this research are regarded as stories people "tell themselves about themselves" (Burke, 2004: 122), that is, constructions of reality expressed through language (or visual means). In this light, there is no 'authentic' source that speaks for itself, nor an authentic reality outside language. This archival material is supplemented by additional sources (programmes of performances, articles, reviews and television programmes,) from my personal archive, from the Library of the Greek Parliament, the Library of Theatre Museum, the Library of the Kalamata International Dance Centre and from personal archives of individuals.

Accessibility of sources is a major issue for every research project. Obtaining access to the companies' and personal archives was a matter of personal communication and trust and, furthermore, it involved a range of tactics and negotiations, such as adaptability and flexibility, which, as Hammersley and Atkinson note, draw "on the intra- and inter-personal resources and strategies that we all tend to develop in dealing with everyday life" (2007: 41). Access also involved issues of privacy, since almost all the companies' materials (except for the archive of Edafos Company) were located in the artists' residences. Trust, confidence and discretion were also important for the artists to allow me to enter into their personal settings, and these qualities were based on our shared

background from the State School of Dance and my own involvement in the dance field.

Moreover, companies' and personal archives were organised to varying degrees by non-professional archivists, often having a limited number of sources and financial resources. Under such conditions, access to the whole archive was not possible and financial records and choreographic notes were inaccessible to me. Artists showed a predisposition to promote the final work as the only valid source for examination and were hesitant in discussing dance in relation to economic issues and material conditions of production. Both stances reflect dominant conceptual frameworks within which dance is conceived and presented as autonomous from economic imperatives, and at the same time, see dance performance as a finished product for exposition to an audience (see also below pp. 132-133 on dance policy).

Finally, issues of translation interfere in the process of the final text, as the majority of sources are in the Greek language. Great attention was paid to accuracy of translation and, when needed, footnotes are added for better clarification. Even though, the issue of translating terms and notions from a language to another has conceptual implications, this task is far beyond the scope of this thesis. Wherever needed, however, an examination of the specific meaning(s) of a term in the Greek context and its implication for this thesis is included. Indicative of the conceptual perplexity in different languages, is the use, in Greek language, of the notion of 'entechnos choros', which can be translated as 'artistic dance' (Tsoutsoura, 2004: 22). The term can be equated with the notion

of ‘theatrical dance’ in English language, for it refers to dance as an art form performed in the theatre and it suggests the difference between ‘entechnos’ [artistic] dance and other types of dance (folk, recreational, social). However, the term applies to ballet and contemporary dance but not to other theatrical choreographies, such as for example the chorus of ancient drama or musicals, implying specific socio-historical tensions in the need to conceptually frame ballet and contemporary dance as artistic and not as theatrical. The elaboration of theoretical and critical Greek language on dance, as well as the translation of terminology of dance in Greek, is a crucial issue for creating conceptual frameworks for dance studies in Greek language.⁴

1.2.2. Video recordings⁵

The problem of dance’s ephemerality has been lessened to some extent by the availability of video recordings. All recordings however are partial, showing only the camera’s viewpoint and they capture only one specific performance or rehearsal of the work, unless they are edited versions using material from different recordings. Yet, they provide the only available source of information for the

⁴ An interesting exploration of such problems is provided by Maria Tsoutsoura, scholar of comparative linguistics and teacher of dance history at the State School of Dance during the 1990s. In her article ‘Gia mia elliniki istoria tou chorou [For a Greek dance history]’ (2004: 16-22), she stresses the problems arising when ignoring or misinterpreting terms which refer to specific historical contexts or dance genres, and she also examines the dance books that have been published in Greek since the 1950s.

⁵ A DVD with excerpts of the choreographies analysed in the research is included in the thesis (appendix 8). The selection and montage for SineQuaNon and Oktana Dancetheatre’s excerpts was my responsibility, and it was made by video artist Makis Faros based on the material provided by the companies. Edafos Company’s excerpts included in the DVD were selected by the choreographer Dimitris Papaioannou and the recording was directed by Dimitris Vernikos. The included excerpts are from the first part of the choreography only, named *Requiem gia to Telos tou Eroti* [*Requiem for the End of Love*]. The recording of *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] used for analysis in the research was a different recording of the whole performance, provided by the company for private use only.

appearance of choreographies in real time duration (unlike photographs, for example, which present static moments).

The video recordings of works used in this analysis come from the companies' archives and the personal archives of their members. In general, the material is of poor quality due to the technology available at that time and the specific conditions of their production; that is, they are mostly one camera shot, without editing, from the beginning to the end of the work, and in the case of Edafos Company and SineQuaNon there is only one recording (no different versions) of the entire work. As a result, the dynamics of movement are different from live performance and the full stage picture is altered.

In the case of Oktana Dancetheatre, in addition to the recording of the final rehearsal, and excerpts from a performance recording, the company has produced a videodance called *O Viasmos tis Chlois [The Rape of Chloe]* directed by Giorgos Lanthimos (Lanthimos, 1995 [non-print]). *O Viasmos tis Chlois [The Rape of Chloe]* is a particular scene from *Daphnis and Chloe* (see below pp. 216-217, but also p. 205-206), and this was a unique opportunity for me to compare the video versions.

It became evident that there were issues of dynamics being modified and differences in movement framing. The recording from the rehearsal tends to 'flatten' movement, while video dance accelerates particular movements and qualities through its close-ups and different camera angles. In addition, there are differences in spatial configurations, due to different settings (the theatre stage in

one case, and an old warehouse in the other), the discrete possibilities of the spectator's eye and the camera's focus to capture movement in space, and differences in casting. As a consequence, my perception of the choreography was enhanced in the cases where more than one version of the choreography formed the basis of my analysis.

1.2.3. Magazine publications and press reviews

The specialised magazines Choros [Dance] and En Choro [In Dancing] are important primary sources as the only magazines of the period dedicated to dance. Choros [Dance], published by the Somateio Chorou kai Rhythmikis [Association of Dance and Rhythm] has been circulating since 1987 and it focuses mainly on performance information, reviews and general articles on dance history, anatomy or dance pedagogy. En Choro [In Dancing] (1994–1999), edited by Giannis Dontzakis, a principal dancer of the Ballet Company of National Opera. It included reviews, interviews and presentations of performances from Greece and abroad. The magazines' activity during the 1990s (but not today) can be interpreted as part of the 'dance boom' of the period.

The reviews published, or the lack of them, indicate the impact of the particular performances and reveal issues and tensions around which those very reviews were constructed (aesthetic values, theoretical propositions on the nature of art, and criteria of judgment). They thus provide a framework within which performances were discussed, and reveal aspects of the dance discourses of the times. Furthermore, both magazines help in examining the general artistic context,

other performances, dance workshops, festivals, as well as aesthetic issues, as they are represented in the texts and the visual material (photographs) of the magazines.

In addition, newspapers with wide national circulation started to feature regular dance reviews by specialist critics. Kathimerini, a right-wing daily newspaper, included a weekly review by dance critic Andreas Rikakis. To Vima (weekly published) and Eleftherotypia (daily evening publication) were orientated towards the socialist party and had weekly articles by Clementine Vounelaki and Mirka Psaropoulou, respectively. Finally, Natasha Hassiotis was the dance critic for the left-wing daily newspaper Avgi.⁶ In addition, there were a handful of journalists covering cultural events in general, which also occasionally wrote for dance performances, as well as a few theatre critics (see pp. 254 - 255).

In addition, popular and lifestyle magazines (Elle, Marie Claire, Status) started in the 1990s to include dance in their columns,⁷ either as articles and interviews, or as listings in their agenda of events, sometimes even as photographic reportage and fashion photography. The articles and photographs from lifestyle magazines play an important role, for they not only depict the artists and their work, but also expose the convergence of the companies' promotional strategies and their exploitation by the media. As such, they provide evidence for how dance was conceived within a context wider than the artistic, but also indicate the encounter between popular culture and dancing bodies.

⁶ Indicative of the impact of those newspapers on the public is their national circulation. In 1995, Kathimerini sold 12.637.757 copies, To Vima 9.433.766 copies, Eleftherotypia 30.137.025 copies and Avgi 647.306 copies (Athens Daily Newspaper Publishers Association, no date, [online]).

⁷ In some magazines, dance articles were written by the same critics writing for newspapers.

1.2.4. Interviews

During the research, a series of semi-structured formal interviews were conducted. These interviews include all the permanent dancers of the companies and their choreographers, some members of the first Advisory Board of the Ministry of Culture, the then Minister of Culture and some of the critics who regularly reviewed dance.⁸ Interviews provided people with a vehicle for expressing their individual perspectives and understandings, and hence to reveal differences instead of insights into a shared culture. Moreover, counter-balancing the tendency to give authority to choreographers or to practitioners, the research equally includes critics, journalists and the Minister, stressing the validity of multiple perspectives.

As a researcher, I had to be very conscious about the preoccupations each person had during the interviews, her/his position in the field, and their expectations from the research. As people are not accustomed to being involved in academic research, I noticed that at times they had contradictory feelings, like insecurity about their contribution to the research on one hand, and a sense of pride for being part of it on the other. The differences between choreographers and the other parties were very obvious. Choreographers give interviews very often, and hence they were more confident with the interviewer. At times, they were restricted by

⁸ Other members of the Board and critics did not consent to contribute. This can partly be explained by the lack of familiarity with academic research and their insecurity on commenting on events in which they were involved.

their own public image and they tended to repeat selected information according to this image. Time restrictions and my own limited experience in interviewing did not fully overcome that problem, but this issue of the choreographer's self-affirmative profile can be taken into account in the research. On the other hand, the dancers tended to be more flexible during our encounters, and a crucial fact of the interview was the confidence they felt with me due to my own experience as a dancer and our common educational background.

The issue of the presentation of other voices in the final text is a methodological decision, which exposes the position of the researcher towards her/his own authority. Anthropologist James Clifford suggests the possibility of using one of the two styles of writing: the indirect, in which the researcher paraphrases and interprets the other 'voices' and the direct style, in which the researcher uses quotations (Clifford, 1988: 46–54). This research employs the direct style as a means of allowing the different sources, voices and agents to become apparent in the text. However, this is not a neutral procedure, since the selection of quotes, their translation and presentation within an argument are all parts of the researcher's interpretive decisions.

1.3. Secondary Sources

Secondary sources, for this researcher, are those sources which informed the theoretical frameworks of the examination, in relation to the specific subject, namely, contemporary dance in Greece, and those publications and academic

researches (see 1.1, pp. 19-28) which provided information on the historical and artistic context.

Since the late 1980s and in contrast to the limited literature on theatrical dance, dance ethnography and anthropology in Greece has shown a substantial increase in fieldwork and academic research examining issues of identity, gender and cultural meanings in folk and social dances (Cowan, 1990; Koutsouba, 1997; Shay, 2006). In this anthropological endeavour, attention has shifted from similarities to differences, from a unified community or nation to specific groups of people and individuals. In the preface to the second edition of the book Identities and Gender in Modern Greece, the Greek anthropologist Efthimis Papataxiarchis notes:

this book indicates a shift from “general anthropology” to “particular anthropology”...a new strategy that approaches the general as incomplete, heterogeneous, often contradictory...

Papataxiarchis, 1998 [1992]: 7–8

Under the influence of international anthropological discourse and postmodernist thought, Greek dance anthropologists changed their theoretical, methodological and ideological viewpoints and their research focused on different ethnic groups and communities, several geographic areas and the Greek diaspora. Drawing on this ‘particular anthropology’, but without claiming an anthropological methodology, my own research situates the examination of the three companies within a rationale which is skeptical about generalisations and stresses the incomplete and contradictory.

Greek sociologists and political scientists argue for an identity crisis in Greek society expressed in ideological terms and in lived experiences. These authors identify a split between dominant discourses and the experiences of people. Some authors, like the Marxist sociologist Dimitris Tsaousis, argue that the crisis is not a contemporary phenomenon, but has its origins in the formation of the contemporary Greek nation-state in the 19th century (Tsaousis, 1983: 15–25). Within this perspective, a variety of sociological and anthropological research projects have been conducted in recent years. Their focus was on how different ethnic groups (like Roma), local communities (for example, Karpathos or Pogoni) or specific artistic genres (such as folk dance) have confronted and negotiated cultural issues, which is the wider area within which this research is placed (Kavouras, 1992; Alexakis, 1992; Rombou-Levidi, 1999; Steriopoulou, 2004; Manos, 2002 [online]; Fakiola, 2007).

Ethnographic or anthropological research on contemporary dance does not exist in Greece; however, an article on folk and traditional dance which addresses the issue of dance's relation to socio-political aspects is of interest due to its topic. Irene Loutzaki, one of the first dance anthropologists in the country, examines four different examples of dance used by political authorities in different historical periods (Loutzaki, 1994: 65–72). Two examples refer to public celebrations at the Panathenaic Stadium of Athens during the Metaxas dictatorship (1937–1939) and the Junta regime (1967–1973); in the third example, Loutzaki examines occasions of celebrations, such as Easter, in which authorities, such as the King, the Prime Minister or a General, were dancing in public, at villages or

military camps; the last example refers to Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou and his performance of *Zeybekiko*,⁹ as a new type of Greek male prototype.

According to Loutzaki, those public performances were negotiations of issues of ethnocentrism, and their different purposes and meanings were deployed in the interplay of dance and context. Loutzaki concludes that the manifestations of ethnocentrism were not cultivated in the same circumstances, nor did they have the same vehicles and media. What is important for my argument is the relation Loutzaki draws between the mastery of the body as a symbol and as an instrument of power in public performances. In particular, her last case study refers to Andreas Papandreou, the founder of PA.SO.K (Panellinio Socialistico Kinima [Panhellenic Socialist Party]), who was the Prime Minister in 1995. His performance of *Zeybekikos* is interpreted as part of an exercise in populist rhetoric indicative in his political slogan for '*allagi*' [*change*] (Loutzaki, 1994: 65–72). This case study then is strongly related to a main argument of my research, that is, the body as a site of negotiation of subjectivities within different contexts.

In terms of Greek literature within the social sciences, the research draws on the work of Nikolas Sevastakis (2004), a Greek social/political scientist who explores the decade of the 1990s, without however focusing on dance. Sevastakis, inspired by Raymond Williams' cultural materialism, examines one of the major lifestyle magazines of the 1990s in terms of the values, ideas and ideologies it promoted in relation to the social context. It is one of the few studies on contemporary culture which examines pop culture, an area not usually explored. According to

⁹ *Zeybekikos* is a (male) solo improvisational dance with movements of balanced precision that expresses intense concentration and self-absorption (Smigel, Raftis & Petrides, 1998 [online]).

Sevastakis the magazine promoted an image of the ‘contemporary nation’ which would be characterised by narcissism, lifestyle, social amnesia and a turn to the private sphere. Like Sevastakis, my study approaches culture as a process characterised by fluidity and contestation over the meaning of symbols and concepts, including that of ‘culture’ itself (Wright, 1998). Unlike him, the examination transcends the realm of ideas and proceeds into an examination of how dancing bodies negotiate cultural discourses.

The early 1990s is a period in dance history which has not been thoroughly examined, at least in English language scholarship,¹⁰ compared to the postmodern dance of the 1960s–1970s and the conceptual dance of the late 1990s. The reason may be that the period sits uncomfortably between the other two identifiable dance movements, without having the prestige of either, as well as its diversity and refusal of categorisation. In this context, the collection Europe Dancing (Grau & Jordan, eds., 2000) is a seminal study which investigates the interplay of dance and cultural identity in several European countries in the post-Second World War era.

Based on a variety of theoretical approaches, the collection sets dance within a European context of cultural differences and similarities. Stephanie Jordan and Andrée Grau in their introduction stress the political significance of examining dance in post-war Europe, for it exemplifies power struggles, in cultural, economic, and symbolic forms, between USA and Europe, between different countries within Europe and between different groups within countries. They

¹⁰ There are numerous articles on choreographers, several works or companies. However, a framework of examination for dance in the early 1990s in general does not exist.

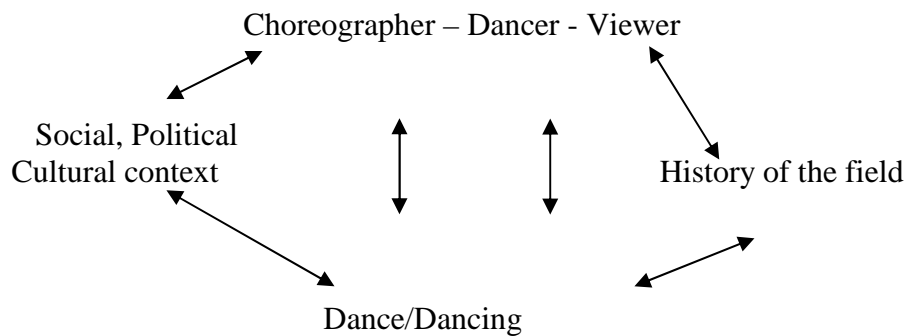
therefore place the category of ‘national’ in brackets. Within this context, this research expands the investigation to the dance scene of Greece, though taking an approach which focuses on specific cases.

Finally, the work of Anna Pakes (2001) explores dance within institutional structures and conditions of production in order to investigate the implications for its interpretation. Her research is situated within philosophical hermeneutics seeking to articulate the ground for the interpretative variability of the audience’s encounter with the work of art. Pakes’s approach provides a grounding framework for my own research as it shares the same interest in the interplay of dance and context, and focuses on the same period of examination.

Pakes suggests that the particular functions of dance economy frame dance works in terms of marketing and discursive context in such a way as to generate demand and high expectations from their (actual and potential) audience. This process has, not only, implications for the aesthetic and promotional aspects of dance but also for the processes of meaning-construction, which is Pakes’ interest. She concludes that dance works’ interpretations are implicated in their institutional context and that a system of meaning-making is open to performers and spectators. Following Pakes, this research explores the three dance works as a complex web of “interpretative itineraries” (Foster, 1986: 242) and investigates a range of social, cultural, political and discursive aspects of a culture, highlighting more explicitly my ‘insider’ status within this culture, and its implications for the research.

1.4. Theoretical frameworks

This examination is based on a model where the artists, the work and the context interact. It is a modification of the model proposed by Susan Leigh Foster in her book Reading Dancing. Bodies and Subjects in Contemporary American Dance (1986), which is in turn based on Roman Jakobson's interpretative model of the relationship between text, author, reader and context (1986: 231) (see diagram below). This approach gives voice to the individuals (dancers, choreographers, critics and myself), while situating them within their socio-cultural and historical context, pointing to a critical exploration of each voice. In addition, the work itself is analysed as site of embodied knowledge and cultural practices.



This model suggests that the choreography is not related to the choreographer as the only person invested in the work, and allows for other possible interpretations, coming from the spectators and the dancers, to arise. The range of interpretations can go beyond the choreographer's intentions, but they are culturally and semiotically (respectively by the context and by the work itself) limited.

Spectators and dancers are actively involved in the construction of meaning(s) during the performance situation, and on this assumption, my own viewings of the

recorded performances allow my interpretations to be written among the others. In addition, the model incorporates the history of dance and its struggles as factors which have implications for both the range of possible dance practices and the possible interpretations of dance works. Trying to condense the forces active in the above schema, I propose that discourses, dancing bodies and institutions are constantly implicated in the production and reception of every dance work.

From the historical point of view, this thesis examines an unexplored area of Greek dance history, the 1990s, while also revisiting previous periods (see below pp. 63 - 84). In terms of historical perspective, my research does not follow either the evolutionary model often adapted, or the often dismissive critical re-writing of the past. What this research proposes is influenced by Walter Benjamin's historical materialism.¹¹ Benjamin argues for the revolutionary experience of time and history, and stresses that traditional historians wish to re-experience the past as it unfolds. He rejects the tendency to exclude the present, and, instead, he proposes a materialistic historical approach to the past:

To articulate what is past does not mean to recognise 'how it really was'. It means to take control of a memory, as it flashes in a moment of danger... In every epoch, the attempt must be made to deliver tradition anew from the conformism which is on the point of overwhelming it.

Benjamin, 1940 [online]

What Walter Benjamin does, is to break with the linear time of progress and to relativise not the past, but the present. That present entails fragments of the past, as it 'flashes in a moment of danger', and it especially entails those segments of

¹¹ A German-Jewish cultural philosopher, Benjamin wrote his fragments *On the Concept of History* in 1940, when he was already experiencing the horrors of the Second World War and before his tragic attempt to leave Europe. Benjamin's thinking has a strong materialist perspective combined with a Messianic vision, a combination which placed him outside the academia of his time (McRobbie, 1999: 77-96).

the past that have remained unfulfilled. At the same time, the present remains open for future rewritings. The historical conditions of Benjamin's writings are, of course, completely different from the context of the examined works. However, his ideas provide a framework for exploring the urgency with which the examined artists attached themselves to the present moment.

According to Peter Osborne, Benjamin's method links history to lived experience:

It locates the existential core of tradition not just in preservation (understood as memory), but in the communicability of experience with the present...This opens up tradition to a historiographic analysis in which different forms of communication appear as embodiments of different kinds of memory.

Osborne, 1995: 133

Even though Benjamin refers to the crisis of narrative to communicate historical experience, Osborne stresses this crisis as the very meaning of modernity, understood as destruction of tradition, and he opens the possibility for different forms of memories and different forms of communication to reveal themselves, including choreographed bodies.

Benjamin's critique of the notion of historical progress relates to art philosopher Noël Carroll's argument about dance and its history (1992: 317-331). Carroll, examining the relation between dance and theatricality, suggests a cyclical structure of dance history where periods of theatricalism are interchanged with periods of anti-theatricalism. He further adds that this cyclical structure is also cynical for "it represents history as a continuing failure of imagination" (Carroll, 1992: 319), thus leaving unfulfilled issues that have to be resolved in a later period. Under this perspective, the model proposed earlier in the chapter can be

applied as an explanatory model to any historical period without implying an evolutionary, progressive logic. It is only the balance and power dynamics between the forces operating that, if shifted, cause change to occur.

Contemporary dance in Greece has been examined as an ideologically constructed artistic form that reached emancipation at the end of 20th century (see above pp. 23 - 24). Instead, I propose that the shifting balances between dancing bodies, institutions and discourses allowed (or not) particular dance practices to emerge. As a consequence, the history of contemporary dance in Greece is understood not as a history of continuities or discontinuities in a linear continuum, but as a history of changes in power balances within a circular path. In this scheme, change is not conceived as evolution and development, but as a force caused by the needs remaining unfulfilled in previous moments.

In particular, for Koula Pratsika, the major initiator of contemporary dance in Greece (see below pp. 64-73), dance was related to issues of national ideology, womanhood and a way of mind-body cultivation. Rallou Manou, Pratsika's student and founder of the first professional contemporary dance company (see below pp. 73-80), put the emphasis on dance as a theatrical artistic practice, within the ideological conservatism of the Cold War politics and upper-middle class aesthetics. Contemporary dance in the post-dictatorship period captured the energetic explosion of the bodies after a period of repression. Finally, the companies examined in Chapters 4–6 shifted the interest to embodiment as a way of experiencing the world. This stance was culturally and historically embedded in a period when people's bodies acquired significance and public visibility in

different areas of life (consumer culture, health discourses and immigration flows).

The research is based on the assumption that dance is an experience and practice always created and interpreted in relation to political, social and economic context. This assumption raises questions about the conceptualisation of dance as practice in its context, and how this conceptualisation affects the creation of a work and its reception. Social theories tend to focus either on the role of the individual in society, or on the impact of the system upon the individual. For example, symbolic interactionism has put emphasis on the actor, while functionalism and structuralism have been concerned with the impact of the system on the individual.

Practice theory seeks to explain the relationships between human actions and systems, providing a methodology which can take into account both society and individual, system and practice (Bourdieu, 1977; Giddens, 1984). Practice theory, as a theoretical perspective in anthropology and sociology, “seeks to explain the genesis, reproduction and change of form and meaning of a given social/cultural whole”, while acknowledging that at the heart of any system lies inequality and asymmetry (Ortner, 1984 [online]: 148–149), that is, dominant and non-dominant ideologies and social positions.

Pierre Bourdieu’s (1930–2002) sociological ‘theory of practice’ is considered to be among the most prominent approaches which seek to bridge social structure and human action. Bourdieu’s notion of field, as exemplified in his two books The

Field of Cultural Production (1993) and The Rules of Art (1996 [1992]), allows the examination of the dance world (artists, resources and institutions) not only in relation to other fields (economic and political) but also in relation to the agents and their practices within the field.¹²

According to Bourdieu, any social formation is structured by hierarchically organised fields (economic, political and cultural), and every field is a dynamic concept of “structured space with its own laws of functioning” which is relatively autonomous but structurally homologous to the others (1993: 6). In particular, the artistic field, while possessing relative autonomy, is contained within the field of power and it does not cease to be affected by the economic and political aspects of the field which encompasses it (1993: 38). Bourdieu argues that these influences do not affect the field directly, but they are always refracted by the field (Bourdieu, 1993: 182), that is, the field transforms the pressures and struggles into its own terms. For example, European integration in cultural terms was envisioned through notions of renewal and transformation. Within the dance field, these same needs were expressed by contemporary dance only, while ballet artists seem indifferent to such aims. More specifically, it was a new generation of contemporary dance artists which rejected previous conventions in their efforts to find their own creative ‘voices’.

¹² Even though Bourdieu did not examine dance, his theory and concepts have been used in dance scholarship. For example, the notion of field has been used by Gay Morris (2006) in her examination of post-war American dance and by Helen Wulff (1998) in her ethnographic study of four major international ballet companies. The notion of distinction has been applied by Ann Daly (1995) in her examination of Isadora Duncan and the notion of habitus was used by Steven Wainwright and Bryan Turner in their examination of issues of aging, career and embodiment in ballet dancers (2004).

In applying the notion of field to my research, special attention was given to the role of history within the formation of the field. Bourdieu argues that each field has its own history, its own logic of action, and most importantly, that present struggles are dependent on “the space of possibilities inherited from previous struggles, which...orient the search for solutions” (Bourdieu, 1993: 183–184). The historical examination of dance in Greece, included in Chapter 2, points exactly at those issues that define the dance struggles of the 1990s: an ever-changing interplay of dancing bodies, institutions and discourses of power, be it nationalism, cold war politics or European integration.

Especially for the artistic field, Bourdieu identifies as a major struggle that between, on one hand, economic and political dependence and on the other, independence of the field (Bourdieu, 1993: 40). In his analysis of 19th century French modernism, Bourdieu foregrounds a tension between several strategies deployed by the artists in order to become independent from market pressures, and their ambivalent position within bourgeois society which they wanted to oppose. When artists declared their independence and indifference to economic aspects of art, their strategies ran the risk of gradually becoming “understood and even respected, then [becoming] expected and finally rewarded” (Bourdieu, 1996: 61). In relation to dance, Gay Morris, following Bourdieu, in her examination of American post-war modernism, argues that “the rejections of the past by young artists and their gradual assimilation into the mainstream became a hallmark of modernism” (Morris, 2006: xvii).

The early work of the companies examined in this thesis is seen as exploring connections between dance and the everyday experience of the artists outside the theatre. These explorations, seen through Bourdieu's ideas, grew out of an unclear relation of dance to the field of power (the lack of dance policy and limited institutions). This connection to life outside theatre was expressed in the artists' self-characterisation as people coming from the margins (and often underprivileged areas) of the artistic field. For example, SineQuaNon members stressed their social origins from regional Greece, Rigos, the choreographer of Oktana Dancetheatre, stressed his background as coming from outside of dance, and Papaioannou, the choreographer of Edafos Company, presented himself as a socially marginal (lower-middle class, gay) artist who invaded dance from visual arts.

Bourdieu's theory of the field not only takes into consideration the relation between different fields, but also within the fields. Within cultural fields, Bourdieu suggests, actors are competing for their positions. These positions are relative to each other and to the overall amount and combinations of capital available to them. The notion of capital, then, is important in defining the position, and thus the power, of each agent's position within the field. Bourdieu identifies four forms of capital: economic, cultural (education and knowledge), social (resources based on social connections) and symbolic capital (recognition and prestige).

Following Bourdieu, Anheier makes a distinction between incorporated cultural capital and symbolic cultural capital. The first one has the form of education and

knowledge, while the second is “the capacity to define and legitimize cultural, moral, and artistic values, standards, and styles” (Anheier, Jurgen & Romo, 1995 [online]: 862). In this sense, incorporated cultural capital can be possessed by the individual through a process of schooling and socialisation. Under this perspective, the State School of Dance, the major vocational dance institution in the country, funded by Koula Prastika in 1930 (see below pp. 67 – 69), could provide dance education with a high degree of cultural capital to its students. Consequently, it is important that the majority of dancers and choreographers examined in Chapters 4–6 have passed through this education.

Symbolic capital, on the other hand, can be attributed to an agent by him/herself or others. Awards, competitions, festivals and platforms of presentation, as those examined later in the thesis (pp. 137 - 146) are institutional structures that can attribute symbolic capital to the artists and therefore reinforce the power of their position within the field in relation to other artists’ positions.

However, artists are not passive individuals within the field; rather, they are active agents who find themselves in a constant dialectical relationship with their social settings. In the research, both dancers and choreographers are regarded as active agents, and choreography is conceived as their action. Even though the relationship between, on the one hand, the choreography as presented on stage, and on the other, the rehearsal process and the contribution of dancers and choreographers is complex, for this research choreography is conceived as a dance work created with the contribution of all the people involved in the production,

but organised by the choreographer. In this sense, the research does not analyse how each agent separately contributed to the work.

According to Susan Leigh Foster, choreography can be treated as “a theorization of relationships between body and self, gender, desire, individuality, communality and nationality’ (1996: xiii). In this sense, choreography becomes an analytical category allowing the dancing body to be related to theoretical issues and allowing dance to be comprehended in a wider context. Dance scholar Janet O’Shea expands Foster’s argument of the potentiality of dance to theorise (Foster, 1995: 16), and she proposes the concept of choreography-as-strategy (O’ Shea, 2006: 143). Replacing the notion of creation with the notion of strategy, O’Shea acknowledges that social, economic, political and cultural matters affect dance but they do not determine it. In this way, she points, on the one hand, to the possibility of the notion of the artist as agent to emerge, and on the other, to broader socio-cultural concerns to be implicated in the choreography.

On the other hand, the agent is not completely free. The history of the field, as well as past struggles, set the background and the available possibilities in each situation, that is, the subject is imbued in a network of discourses. Stuart Hall, referring to the notion of identity, argues:

I use ‘identity’ to refer to the meeting point, the point of *suture*, between, on the one hand, the discourses and practices which attempt to ‘interpellate’, speak to us or hail us into place as the social subjects of particular discourses, and on the other hand, the processes which produce subjectivities, which construct us as subjects which can be ‘spoken’.

Hall, 1996: 5–6

Choreography and dancing bodies are imbued in dance and socio-cultural discourses, and at the same time can reshape and reconfigure possible ways of invention of the subject and play with the symbolic and discursive potential of those discourses. However, as Sherry Ortner points out: “Change is largely a by-product, an unintended consequence of action, however rational action may have been” (1984 [online]: 157). By implication then, dancing bodies can propose envisioning new possibilities and provoke imaginary transgressions but dance may not produce actual social change.

Since the mid-1980s a series of scholars have argued for an expansion of dance disciplines, such as history and dance studies, towards an interdisciplinary theoretical area such as cultural studies (Desmond, 1997: 29–54; Koritz, 1996: 88–103). This theoretical shift has produced several seminal studies and academic research which re-evaluated historical dance figures and aesthetic paradigms under the light of a cultural, political or social contextual sensitivity (Manning, 1993; Daly, 1995; Thomas, 1995; Franko, 1995, 2002; Tomko, 1999; Prickett, 2002). My interpretations were influenced by this opening of the field of dance history to cultural studies, which allowed the examination of the formal elements of dance (movement, space and dynamics) to be related to the social and political context, within which the body played a crucial role.

Dance sociologist Helen Thomas identifies a failure of traditional sociology to address the issue of the body (2003: 13). According to Thomas, the reason for such an omission in sociological theory is the separation of the social and the biological aspects of human beings. As a consequence, there was a split between

social and biological which perpetuates a series of dualisms, such as culture/nature, mind/body, male/female. However, feminist and post-structuralist thought have questioned such dichotomies and the body as an analytic category of investigation has, nowadays, gained popularity (Thomas, 2003: 34–63). In addition, sociologists such as Simon Williams and Gillian Bendelow (1998) have suggested a critical re-reading of classical sociological thought aiming at overcoming the dichotomy of mind/body and stressing the existing bodily aspects within sociology (Williams and Bendelow, 1998).

Within this vast area of interest in the body, my research focuses on the connection between the body and the contemporary sense of identity. Chris Shilling argues that the body becomes increasingly central to the modern person's sense of self-identity, and stresses the increased individualisation of the body (Shilling, 1994: 1). By individualisation, he refers to a notion of body as separate from other bodies, as self-sufficient. His argument extends ideas from the work of Norbert Elias, who examines the civilising processes in terms of historical transformations and their relevance to bodily manners, behavioural codes and forms of control (Elias, 1994 [1939]: 150). Moreover, there is a shift from hard work as the base of competitive capitalism (focus on production) to an emphasis on leisure and consumption. In addition, Mike Featherstone argues that within the context of consumer culture the body presents itself as an object for display (Featherstone, 1982 [online]: 22).

There is, then, a tension between the body as the locus of self-identifications and empowerment and the body on display, as it is on stage. Dance becomes a

mechanism of twofold play: affirming images of idealised bodies or exploring and proposing new forms of agency. The premise of my research is that, in the case studies, dance played both roles. For example, Edafos Company in *Enos Leptou Sigi* [*One Moment of Silence*] displayed male, gay bodies investigating the possibility of representing male homosexual desire, while at the same time, explored decay and death, subjects which disintegrate the body (and society), playing on the edge between full provocation and spectacular idealization.

1.5. Methodology

The methodology of the thesis draws on dance history, dance ethnography and cultural studies. As Ann Dils and Ann Cooper Albright argue in their introduction to Dancing History/Moving Cultures:

Dance history is not a historical record set in stone or even in print, but an evolving discussion about the past that can take many shapes (performed, written, personal testimony, or public manifesto) and can happen as memoir, biography, dance criticism, ethnography, and, research compilation, as well as cultural or critical histories.

Dils & Cooper Albright, 2001: xiv

This quote refers to the diversity of methods, means and final form that dance history can have today, stressing its open, non-authoritative nature, and indicating an intention of several researchers to open the discipline to other fields (cultural studies, cultural and social history). This research addresses the evolving discussion as the examination of contemporary dance in Greece has just started, and as present and past are coming into dialogue through the sources used.

Writing about dance raises the issue of interference and instability between the object of research (the dance) and the written text due, mainly, to dance's non-linguistic nature and its ephemerality (Thomas, 1996: 63–87). The traces of the dance provide a framework for writing about it. These traces may include visual, written but also sensorial and mnemonic sources, all of them, 're-writing' the experience of the performance.

As a dance historian, I brought together the archival material (video recordings, reviews, photographs, articles and interviews) and my viewings of the recorded works, in order to construct my own 'reconstructions' of the works. Following Susan Manning's reconstructions for the page of Mary Wigman's (1993) dances, the reconstructions in this research explore ways in which the works make their spectators re-evaluate their socio-historical context and their own subjectivity. In addition, the analysis of the works employs the framing devices that surround dance, as used by Susan Leigh Foster (1986: 58–65). These are the venue of presentation, the titles of the works, the programme information and its arrangement — in addition, the examination proceeds to descriptions of the choreography and the impact it has on me during the viewings.

Manning argues that reconstruction is a process of recovering dances of the past which can have two opposing aims; one is the recovery of an 'original' text, and the other is the acknowledgement of the researcher's interpretation (1993: 12–13). Helen Thomas, discussing issues of authenticity in musicology and music reconstructions, makes reference to four variations: authenticity may be authenticity in relation to the composer's intentions, in the performer's imaginative

act, in the interpretive ‘conversation’ of the researcher with the past, or finally, in relation to a variety of factors, such as the author’s intentions, performance practices, and the original sound of that time (Thomas, 2003: 125–129). Thomas thus clarifies the limits of authenticity and stresses the debates around it. Similarly, in examining dance, many different positions can be taken. My ‘reconstructions’ are representations/interpretations of the past while they also focus on the discourses outside the works, on the material and symbolic conditions which gave rise to them.

Dance analysis, as the methodology of exploring the choreography in choreographic/movement terms and its interpretation, is a major theoretical tool for dance studies. It helped dance studies to be established as an autonomous discipline in academia and it is important for bringing the movement of bodies within the research frameworks. Janet Lansdale’s (formerly Adshead) model of dance analysis (Adshead, 1988) parallels structuralist studies of language (O’Shea, 2010 [1998], 6; Jackson, 1994, 3-11) by focusing on the components which construct choreography, while Susan Leigh Foster’s model drew on both structuralist and post-structuralist thought.

The model of this research (see pp. 44 - 45) shares with the post-structuralist perspective the idea that dance practice occurs in a system of power relations which foregrounds the constructed nature of any interpretation and knowledge. My reading of the works mobilised the perception of movement, not only, as close reading of selected extracts, but also of the conventions that those movements encoded, through the lenses of the spectator(s) in the process of viewing. Stressing

the encounter between the work, its context and spectatorship, and also reflecting on my own viewings, the sociological, as well as, the aesthetic aspects of dance analysis are foregrounded (Burt, 2000: 130).

The postmodern critique of anthropological knowledge and postcolonial discourse has questioned ethnographic practice and the possibility of finding the truth ‘out there’ in the field. These developments have led the discipline to self-criticism and re-examination of its methods. The need for reflexivity on the part of the ethnographer is stressed since his/her role is implicated in the research itself, in the interpretations and the final text (Williams, 1999: 34–37). Hammersley and Atkinson argue that reflexivity is defined and used in a variety of ways; however, they propose that it is essential to pinpoint that:

The concept of reflexivity acknowledges that the orientations of researchers will be shaped by their socio-historical locations, including the values and interests that these locations confer upon them...Also, it is emphasized that the production of knowledge by researchers has consequences.

Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 15

Social research, then, and ethnography in this case, cannot grasp an autonomous ‘reality’ that exists independently of the researcher’s background, social position and his/her involvement in the research field.

A similar approach is expressed in sociology by Pierre Bourdieu’s ‘reflexive sociology’ which attempts to transcend the opposition between science and its object, as Bourdieu “treats science and scientists as part and product of their social universe” (Postone, Moishe, LiPuma & Calhoun, 1993: 3). The last part of the proposition of Hammersley and Atkinson stresses the ethical and political

implications of every research project, which can be practical (for example, changes in policy) or theoretical (such as disciplinary discourses).

In this context, the dancing body is articulated through discourses and it challenges notions of the 'natural'. By the same token, the research explores how this applies to the three companies in question. Furthermore, as a researcher and spectator I am also inscribed in social and cultural conditions and any interpretation become possible through process where "our bodies, our subjectivities, are implicated" (Thomas, 1996: 83). My own relation to the initial decision to undertake this research indicates the preoccupation of the study. I am a member of this generation; I share common professional dance education with the majority of the artists in this research; I have experienced, as dancer and teacher, that period when young dancers and choreographers rushed to find their creative voice; and I also admit that I stopped dancing and so I did not allow my body to experience the new dance techniques and performance requirements. Despite the autobiographical impetus, the aim is more generally to highlight the impact of the changes that occurred in the 1990s, a historical shift in which the three companies were actively involved.

This interaction of the researcher with the field and the decision to use people's knowledge brought an ethnographic dimension to the research. Because the research is about Greece, similarities to 'home' anthropology are unavoidable. However, often 'being at home' is not at all easy and unproblematic (Koutsouba, 1999: 186–195; Grau, 1999: 167; Giurchescu, 1999: 45). My own positioning was and is shifting and my relation to the works and the artists has changed. As a

Greek, I consider myself, and I am also considered by others, as an insider. As an ex-dancer, I belong to the same artistic field as the companies, and I share with some of their members the same professional dance education.

However, my different dance experiences as dancer and teacher simultaneously constitute me as an ‘outsider’. My dance background helped many of the interviewees, especially the dancers, to feel comfortable and familiar during our encounter, while my status as researcher created methodological distance. In addition, in order to ‘distance’ myself and to question my own preoccupations, I used additional strategies: travelling abroad, periods of working on general literature rather than on the particular subject, and talking to non-Greeks¹³ helped the ‘familiar to become strange’. For example, when I first started the research I was interested in the reason for the success of these companies, as I have experienced it as an audience member. During the research process, I realised that I had to question the meaning of ‘successful’ and how it was constructed and hence to adapt a completely different point of view from the one I was initially familiar with.

1.6. Conclusion

The subject matter and methodology for this thesis have developed out of the need to critically reflect on my own culture and to re-examine the history of dance as cultural practice in Greece. Edafos Company, Oktana Dancetheatre and SineQuaNon are examples of the cultural developments of late modernity, as it is

¹³ My working experience for the International Dance Festival as Research and Educational Officer was very fruitful for it gave me the opportunity to meet many international artists and researchers and discuss with them on dance in Greece.

experienced and interpreted in a local context. My research aims to capture the excitement dance raised and to re-examine it critically in order to build a new approach.

My reading is influenced by the efforts of dance studies to re-examine dance in its social, historical and economic context and of cultural and social scholars to bring the body into historical and contemporary analyses of Western culture. Finally, the dance itself is central in my study, as a way of articulating cultural and historical forces through the body. This methodology highlights the web of power within which contemporary dance was involved, but at the same time it constitutes a discursive framework through which contemporary dance's vitality can be examined. This examination starts in Chapter 2, by focusing on aspects of the history of contemporary dance in Greece and on major issues forming the discourses on dance.

CHAPTER 2

UNRAVELING ASPECTS OF THE HISTORY OF CONTEMPORARY DANCE IN GREECE

2.1. Introduction

This chapter re-examines aspects of dance history in Greece, especially the dance artists Koula Pratsika and Rallou Manou, their practices and the consequences for contemporary dance in the 1990s. The focus on particular people is justified by the lack of a developed infrastructure for dance, a condition which mobilised and made the actions of those individuals more important. In addition, tracing aspects of these individuals' careers reveals the shifting landscape of dance in Greece. Finally, the chapter maps out a network of discourses on the body, dance and its role in society that dominated public debates in the 1990s and indicates the range of ideas within which dance was produced, performed and interpreted.

This historical examination of aspects of dance in Greece, although selective and non-exhaustive, sets parameters within which the companies and their work are examined in the following chapters of the thesis. The existing bibliography on the history of contemporary dance either glorifies the achievements of artistic personalities (Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004; Stamatopoulou-Vassilakou, no date; Bournelli, 2008 [online]) or tends to examine dance through concepts such as nationalism, implying an evolutionary and progressive logical development from dance as propaganda to dance's emancipation as an art form (Kouostas, 2007; Tzartzani, 2007; Hassiotis, 2001a [online]). The idea anticipated in the chapter is that there is a more complex relationship of forces and tensions which are imbued in power relationships between the artists, the dance field and the wider context.

2.2. Re-approaching dance history and politics in Greece

2.2.1. Examining the early 20th century and the inter-war period

Koula Pratsika (1899–1984) is a key figure in the history of dance in the country and her heritage is related, directly and indirectly, to the dance scene of the 1990s. Pratsika's heritage is crucial for the development of contemporary dance in both educational and performance terms, for in 1974 her dance school became the State School of Dance and her dance philosophy had a major influence on cultural life for more than fifty years.

Koula Pratsika was born in the Peloponnesian city of Patras into an upper-class family of merchants. Her first personal involvement in dance was in the production of *Promitheas Desmotis* [*Prometheus Bound*] during the first Delphic Festival in 1927, as the leader of the chorus. The Delphic Festival was organised by the American-born Eva Palmer-Sikelianos (1874–1952) and her husband, the Greek poet Angelos Sikelianos (1884–1951).

The '*Delphic Idea*' of Angelos Sikelianos was a spiritual and ideological vision of Delphi¹ as a place and a symbol. Sikelianos dreamt of a universal union of all people based on eternal ideas, principles and truths. It was a utopian vision, strongly against any rationalism or the harsh reality of the interwar period (Sikelianos, 1998 [1932]: 251). In this context, Palmer's theatrical experiments with reviving the ancient chorus of tragedy were based on the assumption that ancient music had survived through Byzantine music to the modern folk songs of

¹ Delphi was one of the greater spiritual places in ancient Greece dedicated to the god Apollo. It was also the location of the most important oracle in the ancient Greek world and it was believed to be the centre of the universe (*omphalos*).

Greek culture.² This argument supported the idea of survival of Greek culture through time, assuming an eternal Hellenic spirit.³ The festival received international attention and Sikelianos stated his belief in tragedy as the highest form of social and spiritual creation (Hartnoll, 1983: 351).

At the beginning of the 20th century, the survivalist argument, namely the belief that ancient traces have survived in the rural culture of modern societies, had an impact on the intellectuals of that time, especially in Greece, as anthropologist Michael Herzfeld argues: “the Greek intelligentsia...found it useful to treat the local peasantry internally as a backward population while simultaneously presenting folk culture to the outside world as evidence of a glorious common heritage of all Greeks” (Herzfeld, 1987: 9). The Delphic Festivals received national and international attention despite the controversy raised among the intellectuals and artists in the country about their ideological orientation. On one hand, Sikelianos was accused of idealism, nationalism, and formalism by the left intelligentsia (Georgousopoulos, 1991: 125), and on the other, many felt that the “experiment was extremely intellectual...and full of aesthetic sensation” (Miliadis, 1998 [no date]: 96). Palmer’s influence is said to have been passed to Koula Pratsika and, through her school, it is thought to have affected Greek theatrical research on ancient drama as a whole (Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004: 28).

² Eva Palmer’s fascination with Greece started when she met Raymond Duncan and his wife Penelope in Paris in 1902 and she followed them to Greece in 1906. In the Duncans’ home, Palmer met Penelope’s brother, the Greek poet Angelos Sikelianos, whom she married in 1907 in the United States.

³ Supporters of that belief included many artists such as Konstandinos Psahos, the composer of the music for *Prometheus Bound*, as well as the composer Menelaos Pallandios and music professors Thrasyvoulos Georgiadis and Simonas Karras, all of them collaborators of Pratsika.

Pratsika studied at the Hellerau-Laxenburg School (1927–1930) and she obtained the degree of ‘Rhythmische-Musikalische’ (Education through Music and Rhythm) and ‘Bewegungs Lehre’ (Dance) (Pratsika, 1991: 19). Hellerau was the school founded in 1910 by Émile-Jacque Dalcroze (1865–1950), a Swiss music teacher and theoretician, outside Dresden, Germany. After World War I, the school had moved to Luxembourg Castle near Vienna, Austria, and changed its name to Hellerau-Laxenburg.

Dalcroze’s system of musical education, known as *eurhythmics*, was the study of rhythm through the bodily experience of the interpreter. Eurhythmics was primarily a system of musical education, but it became a major influence on the development of dance, mostly in Europe but also in America.⁴ According to the prospectus of the Hellerau school, “the aim of the entire method is to build an entirely harmonious person, his understanding and his character together” (Manning, 1993: 52). The potential of eurhythmics to educate the student in a holistic and harmonious way, and consequently, to promote his/her individuality and personal creativity, are attitudes which had a great impact on dance education in Greece through Pratsika. Hellerau-Laxenburg was directed by Dalcroze’s collaborators, Christine Baer and Rosalia Chladek, and the school’s rationale has shifted towards an exploration of movement and dance in contrast to Dalcroze’s original method (Partsch-Bergson, 1994: 121).

⁴ Dalcroze’s influence on dance in Europe became possible through his students, among whom the German choreographer and dancer Mary Wigman (1886–1973) and the Polish-Jewish dancer and dance teacher Mary Rambert (1888-1982), founder of Ballet Rambert (latterly, the Rambert Dance Company) in the UK, are some of the most prominent. The Denishawn School of Ted Shawn and Ruth St Denis, founded in California in 1915 as the first American modern dance school, also had the system of Dalcroze included in its curriculum.

Pratsika found in Dalcroze's educational system the "essence of Greek education: rhythm, dance, music" (Pratsika, 1991: 15). According to Pratsika, this unified approach had great significance for the human being, because "rhythm is taught as a means to unite body and mind" and this body-mind cultivation is philosophically and aesthetically based on Greek values of beauty and humanism (Pratsika, 1991: 15). Pratsika, then, in her educational practice, proposed a combination of ideas relevant to ancient Greek philosophy, with body rhythm and human cultivation.

Based on this philosophy, Koula Pratsika founded her amateur dance school in 1930 in Athens, and in 1937 the school became the first professional dance school, at the same time when the first ballet schools for amateurs were also founded in Athens.⁵ Influenced by Eva Palmer-Sikelianos, and by Dalcroze, Pratsika believed in dance as a medium to achieve a 'holy harmony', as an art form related to the rhythms of poetry, of speech and of the inner rhythms of the body, a belief also reflected in her life. In addition, she stressed the ancient heritage of dance more than her Dalcrozian education (Tsoutsoura, 2004: 21), expressed even in the name of her school as 'Scholi Orchistikis Technis [School of Orchesis]'.⁶

⁵ Adam Morianof, a Greek emigrant from Russia, came to Greece in 1929 and opened his ballet school in 1932. Manon Renieri, another emigrant from Georgia, founded her ballet school in 1934 (Tsatsou, 1999: 124–125).

⁶ Orchesis was the term used in ancient texts when referring to dance.

The curriculum of Pratsika's school included practical and theoretical subjects, such as eurhythmics, modern dance technique,⁷ gymnastics, music but also dance history, folk studies and art history. She also organised a performing group consisting of her students, which performed works choreographed by herself and her collaborators, most of whom were her graduates.⁸ Those works were based on ancient and folk themes, and the repertory also included folk dancing. Despite her choreographic creations, Pratsika's reputation is mainly based on her educational achievements. Pratsika allied her school to an intellectual and upper-class context by her collaboration with respected members of Athenian society, as well as artists and intellectuals⁹ who taught in her school and were artistic collaborators in the school's performances.

Dalcroze's method is "not a physical technique or performing art in itself, but a way of teaching and learning" (Odom, 2004 [on line]: 138) and helps promote students' self-confidence and creativity. Eurhythmics and choreography were connected in Pratsika's curriculum, and its reverberations can be found in the existing curriculum of the professional dance schools in Greece today. Eurhythmics is, still, a compulsory subject for all professional dance schools, while choreographic composition is a non-compulsory subject. The rationale is expressed by Pratsika's student and choreographer, Zouzou Nikoloudi, who argues that:

⁷ The first teacher of modern dance technique in the Pratsika School was Loukia Sakellariou (1915–2003), a student of Gret Palucca (1902–1993). Sakellariou was completely dedicated to modern dance and she had a radical opposition to ballet, an orientation also shared by Pratsika.

⁸ For example, Agapi Evangelidi (1919-1997) and Zouzou Nikoloudi (1917-2004)

⁹ Many of Pratsika's teachers in the school and collaborators, such as Giannis Tsarouchis, Stratis Myrivilis and Pandelis Prevelakis, were members of a major artistic and intellectual movement of the inter-war period called 'the generation of the 1930s'. The common aim of this diverse movement, which became dominant after the war, was the renewal of arts, the combination of Western influences and Greek traditions and the creative assimilation of modernism.

eurhythmics, with its four constitutive fields of study: time-space-dynamics-form, cultivates the musical sensibility [of the student], but most importantly, it can provide the basics for choreographic composition.

Nikoloudi, 1992: 14

This point is further enriched though the professional alliances of Pratsika's students with the theatrical context in the country, especially ancient drama.¹⁰ The triptych dance-music-speech, which characterised ancient drama, found, through eurhythmics, an application to dance practice. As a result, a strong connection has been created between dance, music and theatre which has affected practices of choreographing, interpreting¹¹ and viewing dance.

Delineating the main influences and practices of dance in Greece, dance critic Natasha Hassiotis argued that:

Modern dance in Greece seems to be the outcome of influences from the two prominent [dance] poles of the second decade of the 20th century: Germany and the U.S. The impact from Germany was the educational method to approaching movement, eurhythmics, according to the system of Emile-Jacques Dalcroze. From the U.S came the abandoned vision of Isadora Duncan, on "Hellenism". These two directions functioned, the first as method, and the second as purpose in shaping and inflecting choreographic production in Greece for a very long time.

Hassiotis, 2001a [on line]

Hence, aspects of ancient Greek heritage, educational methods such as eurhythmics, and arguments about the continuation of Greek culture from ancient

¹⁰ Pratsika's students who collaborated with theatre companies included, among others, Maria Hors collaborating with the National Theatre from 1958 until 1993 and Maria Kynigou-Flamboura collaborating with the Theatro Technis [Art Theatre] from 1969 until 1988. These were the two major theatre organisations in Athens during the whole 20th century.

¹¹ Dance criticism until the 1980s was mainly written by music critics. Theatre critics occasionally wrote reviews of choreographies included in theatre plays but not of independent dance performances.

times to contemporary folk culture, constructed a particular vision of modern dance in Greece, which became dominant in the 1930s onwards, through the influence of Pratsika, her students and her school.¹²

Pratsika's search for 'Greekness', in the sense of national continuity and an essential core of Greek spirit, stands comfortably within the nationalistic ideology of Ioannis Metaxas's regime (1937–1940). As literary scholar Vassilis Lambropoulos argues, "aesthetic ideology seem transferable to other areas of practice and adaptable to different searches...In such cases, the ideals of art are deemed exemplary and are applied to enterprises...for which they were not originally meant" (Lambropoulos, 1987: 19-20).¹³ For Metaxas's regime, the key ideological issue was national regeneration through the creation of a new civilisation based on a return to the roots and sources of national tradition.

A manifestation of this ideology was a series of mass festivities organised yearly at the Panathenaic Stadium in Athens (1937–1939). In these festivities, rural people from all over Greece presented dances and Pratsika was the choreographer of the event. The examination of Pratsika's practices under the scope of nationalism is a theoretical direction of growing interest within Greek dance literature (Tzartzani, 2007; Koustas, 2007; Loutzaki, 1994, 2008). However, what has been under-examined is why Pratsika managed to be so compelling. In other words, why did her ideas about the body, the nation and the (female) individual

¹² There is a similar tradition of Dalcroze and Central European influences for the foundation of contemporary dance schools in other Balkan countries, such as Ana Maletić's School of Contemporary Dance in Croatia (Janković, 2008: 17–39).

¹³ There is a burgeoning bibliography on similar issues regarding dance in Germany in the first half of 20th century. See Kant, 2011: 119-143; Oberzaucher-Schüller, 2011: 145-165. For an overview of research on Ausdruckstanz and politics see Franco, 2007: 80-98

prove powerful? The idea put forward in this chapter is that Pratsika's dance practice and philosophy were relevant to a greater cultural field, that of women's movement and physical culture, at the turn of the century.¹⁴ A complex interplay of gender issues, ideology and bodies allowed Pratsika and other women to occupy a space in the public sphere, confronting the danger of social exclusion.

In particular, Pratsika's philosophy of movement shares the same beliefs as those expressed by the middle- and upper-class women's organisation, 'Lyceio ton Ellinidon' [Lyceum of Greek Women], and its founder, the feminist Callirhoe Parren (1859–1940). Parren, through the magazine Ladies Journal (1887–1917), advocated the right to physical exercise and sport for upper- and middle-class women and supported her ideas by inventing a specific female athletic tradition based on ancient Heraia games. Parren, then, advocated women's right to exercise by connecting it to ancient heritage and thus validating its merit.

Later, in 1911, Parren transformed the folk dances of rural Greece into artistic and national products by presenting them in Anthestiria. This was a public celebration, named after the ancient Greek rites for spring, and this theatrical presentation of folk dances was included in the May Day Celebration. By merging bourgeois aesthetics and nationalist ideas, Parren had contributed to the social construction of the bodies of Lyceum girls, that is, a social identity for middle- and upper-class women in the modern Greek world (Fournaraki, 2010: 2053–2089).

¹⁴ The links of dance to physical culture, social reform and women's rights at the beginning of the 20th century do not apply only to the Greek case. Linda Tomko (1999) and Ann Daly (1995) examine dance in progressive era America, and Dee Reynolds (2007) has examined Wigman's work in the light of German body culture and life philosophy.

Parren's experiments, as well as those of Palmer, paved the way for Pratsika to propose a vision of (female) body cultivation which had already been in progress since the turn of the century. Secondly, both Parren's and Pratsika's constructions of female bodily culture opened a social area of practice and experience for middle- and upper-class women which was completely different from the social dancing experiences of waltz and polka danced in the upper-class salons (Bakounakis, 1991: 49–50). These constructions had emancipatory power for those women in a variety of ways. Those practices proposed a social space for women's actions, where their sense of self-confidence could be promoted, for they did not need a partner in order to perform in public. In addition, through bodily culture they liberated their bodies by using a different dress code and non-codified movement vocabulary, and enriched their embodied experiences.

As a consequence, women's presence in the dance field was dominant for almost four decades. However, Pratsika's practice of dancing as a way of life with a specific philosophy, was incompatible with dance as a professional theatre vocation. It was more a vision of educating and cultivating, rather than an artistic activity which involves labour and has economic dimensions. This vision was reinforced by, but also, reinforcing, dance's upper-class connections.

Indicative of the power of such attitudes towards dance are the remarks of dance anthropologist Irene Loutzaki, who many years after Pratsika's death, argued that:

[Parents] usually think of dance as a kind of knowledge, especially for the girls, which along with the knowledge of music (piano) and the knowledge of foreign languages can shape girls' bodies and cultivate their personalities. But be careful! This knowledge will become problematic if the girl starts thinking of it as a professional means.

Loutzaki, 1992: 39

Dance was conceived as part of a philosophy of body-mind cultivation and, at the same time, the dancing body, as bodily/material display and part of the economy of labour and desire, was related to dance in musical theatre, where dance was perceived as entertainment and not art. Finally, because Pratsika's choreographic themes were drawn mainly from ancient and folk stories, contemporary dance was linked to narrative and storytelling.

2.2.2. Looking at the post-war era

From the 1950s onwards, contemporary dance was dominated by the presence of Rallou Manou and her dance company Elliniko Chorodrama [Hellenic Dancedrama] founded in 1951. Pratsika continued her educational and performance practice,¹⁵ at the same time as a few solo dancers, such as Zouzou Nikoloudi and Agapi Evaggelidi (both collaborators of Pratsika), and the private ballet company of Iro Sismani (1955–1962) were also active in the field.

Rallou Manou (1915–1988), daughter of Peter Manos, an officer of the Greek army, and Sophie Tompazi, offspring of a well-known family from the island of Hydra (Stamatopoulou-Vassilakou, no date: 53), was a student and collaborator of Koula Pratsika. Manou also studied dance in New York from 1946 until 1949, where she attended dance classes with Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey and Hanya Holm. At the same time, she studied at the New York University

¹⁵ An important performance was *Moira ton Mykinon* [*The Destiny of Mycenae*], a collaboration of Pratsika's School with German choreographer and dancer Harald Kreutzberg (1956).

Department of Dance and Physical Education (Rouvali, 2000: 14; Stamatopoulou-Vassilakou, no date: 17).

In Athens in 1951, Manou founded her own professional dance school and her dance company Elliniko Chorodrama [Hellenic Dancedrama], which was to dominate the contemporary dance scene until the 1980s. Elliniko Chorodrama [Hellenic Dancedrama] was founded with the support of a team of artists and its aim was to create and support a Greek dance form by using elements from the Greek tradition in terms of movements, music and costumes (Stamatopoulou-Vassilakou, no date: 62; Rouvali, 2000: 14).

Manou, following Pratsika's example, gathered around her company and school "the most important, the most creative painters, poets, and composers ...that are key personalities of the intellectual life" as the Nobel-awarded poet Odysseas Elytis wrote in 1956 (cited in Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004: 270). Unlike Pratsika, however, she adopted a particular movement technique, that of Graham, for choreographing on themes from ancient Greek tragedies, Greek mythology and tradition, and contemporary issues (Bournelli, 2008 [online]: 68; Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004: 271–272).

Manou is praised for creating the first contemporary dance company providing sustained dance training to its dancers and a repertory of works (Bournelli, 2008 [online]: 68; Fessa-Emmanouel, 2000: 266–277). The notion and practice of a professional dance company helped create an image of dance's independence from its educational context (Hassiotis, 2001a [online]), and, in addition, through

Manou's collaborations with other artists, dance started to establish itself as a well-respected theatrical art. Finally, the performances of Elliniko Chorodrama [Hellenic Dancedrama] contributed to building an audience for dance (Tsatsou, 1999: 126).

In the late 1940s, Graham was a major international artist, and she herself was interested in ancient Greek myths and female heroines. Manou allied herself to Graham's practice for she could identify her own vision with that of Graham, being an expression of feeling through a mythic narrative, and, at the same time, she could differentiate herself from the (mostly) German dance tradition of her teacher, Koula Pratsika. In addition, Manou found in Graham's technique "a system of moving based on esoteric intensity, disciplined freedom and anguished dynamics" (Stamatopoulou-Vassilakou, no date: 56), which could help her to present choreographies reviewed as "full of expressiveness...simplicity and dignity" (Cohen, 1965: 57).

Literature on dance and theatre suggests that post-war Greek culture in general, and dance in particular, were flourishing in the 1950s (Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004: 47–49; Stamatopoulou-Vasilakou, no date: 56–57). Artistic production, however, had a strong ideological orientation towards a Hellenic character (Bournelli, 2008 [online]: 58; Stamatopoulou-Vassilakou, no date: 57; Hassiotis, 2001a [online]) and constructed an image which ignored its foreign influences, and focused on its Greek themes and content. Some authors place the intense cultural activity of the period within the practice and philosophy of rebuilding the devastated European countries after the war (Stamatopoulou-Vassilakou, no date: 56; Fessa-

Emmanouel, 2004: 47–48). Others examine Pratsika and Manou in relation to their Hellenic ideal as artists banned under a national(ist) ideology (Koustas, 2007: 125–127; Tzartzani, 2007: 20; Hassiotis, 2001a [online]), because, the connection of Greece, history and nation was a major cornerstone of conservative and nationalist political ideology dominant from the inter-war period to 1974. However, political scientists stress the importance of the geopolitical dichotomy between West and East for any examination of the post-war era in Greece (Voulgaris, 2008: 27–31).

In the international context of the Cold War, Greece was allied to the Western world, while located in the midst of an Easterly dominated Balkan peninsula. After 1947, the country was under the Truman Doctrine, which included not only economic and military aid to Greece, but also the political surveillance of the U.S.A. U.S.A. politics regarding Greece was perceived negatively by some part of Greek people and their active involvement in the country's political affairs until the end of the dictatorship created an anti-American sensibility, which became dominant in political rhetoric during the early 1980s.

After the end of the Greek Civil War (1945–1949), Greek conservative governments promoted the ideal of 'ethnikofrosyni' [national belief], that is, a nationalistic ideology of obedience to the state and to ideas such as Religion, Motherland and Family (Voulgaris, 2008: 42). The Greek State had excluded left-wing citizens and communists based on a rhetoric which equated communist ideas

with national betrayal.¹⁶ As a result, within the country, people and practices were divided into an official and an excluded culture, a phenomenon referred to by political scientist Giannis Voulgaris as ‘double state’ (Voulgaris, 2008: 36).

Manou, belonging to the official culture, had to negotiate with all these internal and external pressures. She thus adapted a major artistic language, Graham’s dance technique, positioning herself within the accepted practice of the ‘free world’ of the U.S.A. At the same time, Manou’s use of Greek thematic material and search for Greek identity resolved any tensions at the internal level of Greece. As art historian Anna Kafetsi posits in her examination of Greek visual art, “the myth of Hellenism in art was the optimistic and hypocritical face of the [politically and economically] dependent upper class, who concealed the deficiency of freedom within the homogenised processes of capitalism” (Kafetsi cited in Matthiopoulos, 2003: 472).

Manou managed to link Greek nationalism, American modern dance and Cold War politics in an artistic approach, in which movement was perceived as a codified language which could communicate artistically valid and distinctively expressive content. The themes of her choreographies often came from the indigenous tradition and, for that reason, they were expected to communicate with the audience in an automatic and direct way.¹⁷

¹⁶ Despite variations in the degree and practices of such ideology in different historical moments of Greece, “ethnikofrosyni” was the main ideological apparatus of the Greek State, until the end of junta in 1974. During the 1980s legislative acts started, gradually, to promote democratization.

¹⁷ A similar argument is made by Vasiliki Lalioti in her ethnographic research on performance of ancient drama, conducted at the National Theatre of Greece. Lalioti suggests that the actors of the company and the audience attending the performances were identifying themselves with a glorious past in an unquestioned and direct way during the performances of ancient drama. This process was based on a belief that they inherited a ‘natural’ connection to the plays which constituted artistic expressions of their ancestors (Lalioti, 2002: 113–137).

The theme of the work, the movement language and the interpretation of the dancer stand as three different layers of the performance. Movement language came from Graham, the theme came from Greek heritage and there was the dancer who interpreted the dance. Dance became a vehicle for theatrical narration and representation distinct from the choreographer and the dancer as individuals, as well as citizens of the social conditions outside theatre. Dance presented a sense of neutrality for it demanded the interpretation of the dancers to reaffirm the confines of theatrical representation by ‘playing’ their role on stage.

International scholars argued that dance in the Cold War period had faced similar pressures in several countries. For example, Dee Reynolds (2007) has examined Cunningham’s choreographic strategies, practice and philosophy as a way of resisting conformism, the tyranny of the self, and conspiracy theories of post-war America. Gay Morris has argued that Cold War politics have affected modern dance in the USA as it shifted from the national and political issues of the pre-war period to internationalism and a disavowal of the relationship of politics and dance in the post-war period (Morris, 2006). In post-war Germany also, authors identified “a tendency towards the formal and objective, reflecting an ideological oversaturation with expressionism and expressionist dancing” (Jeschke & Vettermann, 2000: 62). Without overcoming the differences of historical and cultural conditions within and between the different countries, looking at dance in such a perspective reveals that the Greek case is not unique and that the implication of nationalism, politics and dance is not a phenomenon known only in Greek dance.

Maria Tsoutsoura, pointed out the class dimension of contemporary dance in the first half of the 20th century (2004: 16-22). She argues that Pratsika managed to link dance and dance education to the upper class through her students, collaborators and the social context of the school. In addition, Tsoutsoura suggests that the social acceptance of dance as a serious art after Second World War II was mainly based on the social and cultural capital of its exponents and its links to a Hellenic-oriented tradition (see also Bournelli, 2008 [online]). Precisely because of their personal economic and social capital, as well as the network of amateur students, Manou's and Pratsika's performance practices could be sustained.

This chapter so far, has argued that if dance wanted to become a serious art, it needed to overcome its bodily and material substance, and to avoid any reference to the context outside theatre. This aim could be achieved by shifting the focus from the body and its use to the dance's content, narrative, symbolism or theme that the body could convey on stage. George Fteris, a journalist, literary and theatre critic, in his introduction to the first Greek book of ballet history published in 1957, argued that "the body, even the most sensual and feminine, through its plasticity becomes ethereal, its materiality vanishes" (Fteris, 1957: 8).

The problem of gender, in a male- dominated society, was approached through a much more complicated strategy, in which social imperative proved to be central. Middle- and upper- class women entered dance not for its material aspects such as labour, but for its philosophy of mind and body cultivation and its life attitude. Dance practice was part of the cultivation of the upper class and part of a rhetoric which connected exercise with health, maternity, and the national body. Under

this scope, dance activities were independent from market forces and the economy of labour, and became part of the life practices for these women.

Susan Manning argued that ballet has historically tended to be related to internationalism while modern dance tended to be related to nationalism.

Modern dance became an arena for the forging of national identity, while 20th-century ballet became an arena for international competition.

Manning, 1988 [online]: 36

Despite its influences from Europe and the USA, contemporary dance in Greece played the role of the indigenous dance tradition, as opposed to ballet which was considered an imported genre. The reasons may include not only the interplay of modern with national(istic) discourses (Tzartzani, 2007; Koustas, 2007) but also, the assumed strict codification of ballet which helped to build an image that dance does not fit the Greek character and body (see below pp. 85-87).

For half a century then, contemporary dance in Greece was related to powerful female pioneers, whose efforts and practices helped contemporary dance to become conceived as a serious artistic practice, which was, nevertheless, elitist and heritage-oriented rather than experimental or vanguard.

2.2.3. Contemporary dance after the dictatorship

The dictatorship (1967–1974) marked the accumulation of intense control and repression of bodies, mentalities and moralities in Greece, a long process which began in the early 20th century. The Colonels' Prime Minister, Georgios

Papadopoulos, referred to Greece as a “patient needing surgery...who has to be tightened on the bed for the purposes of the surgery” (anon, 1967 [online]), and therefore his government had to ‘immobilize’ the country, which literally meant repression, restraint, exclusion and imprisonment.

Mary Douglas in her study of the relationship between social constructions of the boundaries of the physical body and the body of the society has argued that the body is a symbol of society (1966). Consequently, societies can be spoken of in embodied terms, as did Papadopoulos. Societies, then, can have heart, blood, head and organs, and by the same token, Greece in the late 1960s was in paralysis and in danger of dying. This ‘immobility’ of the social body was ended in the post-dictatorship era in a forceful way. In almost all aspects of social sphere, in the arts, everyday life, political demonstrations, festivals, music and theatre, a great number of people, especially young people, were actively participating and creatively exploring their freedom (Panagiotopoulos, 2003; Varopoulou, 2009: 17-18, see also Elefandis’s argument on pp. 114 - 117).

In dance, the post-dictatorship spirit of excitement and energetic presence of the embodied individuals were expressed mainly in the work of Haris Mandaounis Contemporary Dance Company,¹⁸ the main permanent independent contemporary company since 1980 (Vounelaki, 1989b: 11). This company had created a

¹⁸ A key figure for contemporary dance in the 1980s, Haris Mandaounis was born in Alexandroupolis in Northern Greece and had initially studied theatre in Athens. He started attending dance classes at the Pratsika School to explore and expand his expressive possibilities. After studying with Peter Goss in Paris, and Bertram Ross and Pearl Lang in New York, he attended courses at the Alvin Ailey School. Winner of the Bagnolet Choreography Competition in France in 1976, he returned to Greece and founded his contemporary company in 1980. He also contributed enormously to dance education in Greece as a contemporary dance teacher at the State School of Dance. His movement language was a combination of Limon technique, jazz elements (such as freedom of the hips and syncopated rhythms) and expressive musicality (see also p. 12 above, footnote 10).

reputation for technical competence, for its inventive movement vocabulary and, the expressiveness and clear structure of the choreographies (Vounelaki, 1989b: 11). This energetic movement language echoed the spirit of dance in the 1980s in general; a decade in which body images were “smooth, controlled and virtuosic” and were operated as “metaphors for a ‘greed and glitter’ era” (Banes, 1994: 44).

On the other hand, press articles on dance in the 1980s in Greece foregrounded a preoccupation for conceiving dance as a practice of mastering and controlling the body, as a way of living in constant struggle and restraint. Dancer and choreographer Maria Alvanou argued that “You have to make dance your way of life. You have to take classes all day long, to think about dance all the time. You are not allowed to go out, to drink, to eat, or to have a personal life” (Alvanou cited in Bioubi, 1983 [online]: 11). The dancer was presented as an ascetic figure without private or social life outside dance, emphasising the conception of dance as a world of its own. Against this conception the artists examined in the thesis proposed a different image; that of artists embracing the life outside theatre, not (necessarily) because they explored social or political issues in their work, but because they revealed their dancing bodies as sites of identification and as meeting places for their theatrical and non-theatrical experiences (see Chapters 4 to 6).

Outside theatre, a gradually increased interest in body appearance, fitness and body cultivation, within a rhetoric of social well-being, shed light on bodily practices and turned people towards interest in their own bodies. For example, fitness programmes offered by the Municipality of Athens in 1993 attracted

14,000 participants, while the next year the number almost doubled (Charalabidis, Maratou-Alipranti & Hadjiyanni, 2004 [online]: 506). Those changing conceptions of the body accompanied broader social changes and affected dance's possibilities for artistic use of the body and for addressing an audience.

On the other hand, the restoration of democracy marked a shift towards the State institutionalisation of dance education, which started earlier with the transformation of Pratsika's school into the State School of Dance. The State School of Dance was officially founded in 1973 by Law 209/1973, and operated under Law 342/1976. In 1985 (Presidential Order 598/1985), the State School was included in the educational system as a three-year vocational programme under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture.

The other professional dance schools were private institutions, under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture (Law 1158/1981). They operated on a curriculum similar to that of the State School of Dance (Presidential Degree 372/1983), and thus, the State School of Dance became the educational prototype of dance education as a whole, for the structure of the curriculum, the taught subjects and the educational aims of private schools were not designed by each school separately, but they were designed by the Ministry of Culture according the model of the State School of Dance.¹⁹ In addition, the State School of Dance validates its own degrees independently, while, private institutions have to be validated by the Ministry of Culture. This autonomy of the State School enhances the symbolic value and credibility of its educational program.

¹⁹ In practice, each private dance school puts its emphasis and special character on specific aspects of the educational program, for example ballet, or a particular technique of contemporary dance, according to the teachers of the school and the philosophy of its owner.

The State status of the school gave opportunities for a greater number of students, coming from different social backgrounds and geographical areas of the country (see p. 154) to study dance. The School's high prestige also allowed male students to be included, at a time when Greek society was still very conservative concerning issues of gender and bodily contact. For example, public secondary education was provided via distinct male and female schools until 1979,²⁰ while the first male student graduated from the State School of Dance in 1977. From the mid-1980s, contemporary dance saw a huge expansion in volume and quality. In terms of numbers, six contemporary dance companies in 1985 became thirty in 1995²¹ and more than forty-five at the millennium. This development emerged in the post-dictatorship artistic, social and cultural milieu, but it was further informed by particular cultural rationales and material resources of the mid-1990s (see below pp. 130 - 146).

2.3. Constructing bodies of discourse

Chapter Two, so far, has examined major personalities and selected historical periods of contemporary dance in the country, setting the historical background of contemporary dance in Greece. In the remaining chapter, the interest shifts to ideas and discourses pertinent to dance in the 1990s, which framed the production

²⁰ From the academic year 1979–1980, the Ministry of Education gradually started to create mixed secondary schools. The programme was completed in 1985. The first ten students of the State School of Dance graduated in 1977; among them, there was one male graduate. By 1985, five more male students had graduated from the State School of Dance.

²¹ Amongst them, only one company was related to a State institution, the Aenaon Chorotheatro, which was the core of the Dance Theatre Company of the National Theatre of Northern Greece.

and reception of dance, and, therefore, are relevant to the examination of the companies in Chapters 4 to 6.

2.3.1. Ballet versus modern dance bodies: national and international aspects of dance reconsidered

Contemporary dance occupied a dominant position within the dance field in Greece due to the strong personalities associated with it and its exploitation as a site for negotiating gender, class and nation. In artistic terms, modern dance was in complete opposition to ballet. Ballet training in Greece started with the first ballet schools founded in the 1930s (see footnote 5, p. 67). The presence of ballet sequences and ballet dancers (mostly foreigners) in musical theatre in the first decades of the 20th century (Seiragakis, 2009) had built ballet's poor reputation and had jeopardised its status as a serious art. The situation did not radically alter even with the foundation of the National Opera in 1940, which included a ballet company for the purposes of opera productions. That is, the National Opera did not found a ballet company, rather a company of dancers was created which participated in the productions of the opera and, occasionally, presented dance evenings.

Ballet was presented by its teachers and practitioners, as well as contemporary dance teachers, as an imported art, having its origins in French aristocracy and carrying a long history and tradition. Ballet technique was conceived as a codified body language, demanding mastery of the body. Based on this argument, ballet artists themselves created stereotypical ideas, promoting an image of Greek bodies as unsuitable for ballet due to their physical appearance. In other words,

ballet artists had to confront their own problems by presenting an argument for ballet's difficulties in the country. Such discourses were reinforced by contemporary dance artists, and gained symbolic power as long as contemporary artists had dominant positions within the dance field.

According to this rhetoric, Greek (female) physicality was considered problematic: "Ballet needs a special body type. We do not have these ideal bodies, unlike northern countries. But we have rhythm and expressivity. Nutrition however can help our bodies to become better" (De Pian²² cited in Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004: 36). A link between physicality, nationality and artistic identity had implications for public images of ballet dancers, the reluctance of young children to study ballet and, as a by-product, the reinforcement of the connection between contemporary dance and a supposedly 'natural' link to Greek bodies.

A second strand of argument about ballet's difficulties in being easily integrated into Greek life was based on supposed psychological and temperamental characteristics: "The Mediterranean [spirit] forces man to amusements and improvisation...we are not willing to follow the discipline necessary for the study of this art" (Metsis, 1980: 8). Giannis Metsis²³ supported the idea that ballet

²² Leonidas de Pian (1928–2009) was a graduate of the Royal Ballet School (1949) and a former dancer with Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas (1950–1955), American Ballet Theatre (1955–1959), Ballets de France (1959–1961) and others. et.al. He became the first Artistic Director of the Ballet of the Greek National Opera in 1994 and he has taught for many years in his private ballet school in Athens. He also founded the Centre of Classical Ballet, a private ballet company that operated from 1974 to 1983.

²³ Giannis Metsis (1931–2010) studied dance in Greece with Aggelos Grimanis and Leonidas Vakoulis at the Ballet of National Opera, and became the first dancer of the Ballet of National Opera in 1950. In the 1950s, he studied in Paris with Olga Preobrazhenska and Lubov Egorova and danced with Roland Petit's Ballets de Paris (1954-1955). He also danced for Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas (1955–1956), and Ballet Rambert (1956-1958) & 1960-1961). Furthermore,

training demands hard work, commitment and discipline which are virtues Greeks do not, usually, share. Such approaches to Greek life and bodies, can also be traced in popular films such as *Never on Sunday* or *Zorba the Greek*, which created stereotypical images of Greeks as extroverted, rebellious and anti-conformists. Even ethnographic research reinforced similar arguments. For example, a series of ethnographic films directed by foreign researchers approached Greece as a locus of *glendi* (joy, enjoyment), or as a poor country or as a paradise in danger of extinction (Stefani, 1997 [online]). These films reinforced stereotypical images of Greece as the ‘other’ of rational and economically developed Europe.

As a consequence, many of the artists in Greece, appropriated such stereotypical perceptions for they helped them to explain their own situation. But more importantly, a new discourse on dance started to become established, namely a perspective which saw dance in Greece happening outside Western or European space and outside present time. According to this perspective, dance in Greece was underdeveloped (out of time) and problematic compared to other countries (out of place). The artists examined in chapters 4 to 6 confronted these perspectives and through their practices proposed alternative conceptualisations. For example, SineQuaNon’s embodiment of modernisation (see chapter 4) or Oktana Dancetheatre’s reference to European dance history (see chapter 5) foregrounded a connection, and equal relationship, between Greece and the world.

he studied with George Balanchine and Martha Graham in New York (1962–1961). He founded his own company in Greece in 1966 and choreographed for his company and the National Opera (Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004; Pandouvaki, 2011, see also p 12, footnote 9). He also taught ballet in his private ballet school and the State School of Dance. Metsis was an active member in official committees such as the Advisory Panel for dance funding of the Ministry of Culture, member of the jury for the Choreographic Competition ‘Rallou Manou’, and a member of the Board of Directors of the State School of Dance.

However, ballet's contribution was instrumental in the creation of an audience for dance, cultivated mainly by the Athens Festival (founded in 1955 by the Ministry of Presidency). The Athens Festival, the main festival for presenting international dance (it seldom presented Greek dance companies except the National Opera), initiated the communication between local audiences and international companies, and contributed, through its programming and the prestige of the venue (the Herodus Atticus Odeon), to the construction of a particular cultural taste. Its impact was greater for it was the only festival which systematically presented dance until the 1990s.²⁴

In a 1991 article, Dora Tsatsou²⁵ (1932–2000), previous Director of the State School of Dance (1980–1988), described this taste:

Herodus Atticus Odeon is full when a star is coming, but half-full in other dance performances. It is full of snobbish people and not of people wanting to communicate with dance. What is wrong? What are they expecting to see in a dance performance? The audience usually wants [to see] good looking bodies, technical achievements and easy stories.

Tsatsou, 1991: 106

The problem for Tsatsou is an elitist and superficial attitude of the audience toward dance. According to Tsatsou, such an attitude focuses on external images,

²⁴ The festival's programming was mainly ballet-oriented and hence the Athenian audience saw the British Royal Ballet (for the first time in 1961), the Bolshoi Ballet (1977) and the Kirov Ballet (first performance in 1966), as well as the American Ballet Theatre (first performance in 1960) and the Ballet Company of the Paris Opera (first performance in 1984), among others. The Festival also presented Martha Graham Company (1983), Merce Cunningham Company (1976), Nederlands Dans Theater (1972), Pina Bausch (1987), Paul Taylor Company (1970) and many more, but it did not present postmodern dance. In the period from 1974 to 1995, the festival presented 46 companies and approximately 275 dance performances, among which the companies who performed most frequently were Maurice Bejart's Ballets (first performance in 1963) and Alvin Ailey Company (first performance in 1979) (Zarkadis, 2005).

²⁵ Dora Tsatsou was a dancer, choreographer and teacher. She studied dance at the Rallou Manou school and continued at the Martha Graham School in New York. She became collaborator of Rallou Manou in her school and her company, and a regular choreographer for the National Theatre Company, before appointed Director of the State School of Dance in 1980.

easily conceived meanings and spectacular achievements. She further suggests that “dance, like every other art is an honest effort to give form to truth, to meaning, to an experience, or to a situation” (Tsatsou, 1991: 106). Her argument then suggests that dance’s importance is not its outer, ready-to-be-consumed form but its potential to embody the human condition. Dance as entertainment and visual spectacle could not fulfil such demands and Tsatsou implies that dance has reached a crucial moment of crisis which has to be faced seriously by dance artists. The crisis had a range of ramifications and it affected dance education, creation and, reception as well as aesthetics of dance.

A vivid expression of this crisis was the conflict and public debate concerning the State School of Dance, which foregrounded the implication of politics and dance in a dramatic way (September–December 1988). An opposition between the Board of Directors and the Ministry of Culture on one side, and the Director of the State School and its teaching team on the other,²⁶ concerning the orientation of the School, vividly exemplified that the crisis did not just concern dance alone but also the different conceptions of the history of dance in the country and different conceptions of the role of the body.

On one hand, there was the vision of ballet and its aesthetics of harmony and clarity, and, on the other hand, the (supposedly) free, expressive body of contemporary dance. However, underneath the clash of different dance styles, was

²⁶ Dora Tsatsou was the daughter of the ex-President of Democracy, Konstantinos Tsatsos (1899–1987), affiliated to the right-wing party New Democracy, while Sophia Papandreou, President of the Board of Directors, was the daughter of the Prime Minister of the country, Andreas Papandreou (1919–1996), founder of the socialist party P.A.S.O.K.

a set of ideas, which conceived ballet as an imported dance practice,²⁷ and, contemporary dance as a native heritage linked to the past of the School. Moreover, different conceptualisations of the (dancing) body encompassed different artistic philosophies.

The President of the Board of Directors, Nelly Carra, argued:

I want to see international standards so that the students would have enough knowledge to dance on solid ground, not on shifting sand. Mastery of body is vital.

Karras cited in Bartholomew, 1989: 19

The Director of the School, Dora Tsatsou, replied that the philosophy of the school, as expressed by its founder, Koula Pratsika was oriented towards:

an expressive movement of the whole body [while] accepting the tradition of Greece. We do not need, we do not want foreign interpretation...Mastery of the spirit is crucial.

Tsatsou cited in Bartholomew, 1989: 19

Mastery of the body and mastery of the spirit became the symbols of a clash with artistic, historical, aesthetical, social and political nuances, in a chain of opposing concepts: ballet against modern dance, international against native tradition, control against freedom of the bodies, conservative against experimental art were all notions implicated in this debate, indicating the importance of bodies' role in society at large and the very close links between dance and politics.

²⁷ This was further intensified by the fact that the Board of Directors had decided to invite ballet teachers from the Sofia Academy of Ballet to teach in the school.

2.3.2. The body as a natural, non-verbal means of communication

In 1994, Denny Efthymiou-Tsekoura,²⁸ then Director of the State School of Dance, in an article in Epilogos Yearbook, advocated an approach to the body and its social role. She argued that artistic experiences in early childhood can offer people extremely valuable sensibilities which “can ‘tune’ their senses forever”, make them “capable of experiencing the multilayered beauty of this world. It’s a revolution of life itself” (Efthymiou-Tsekoura, 1994: 312). Her argument foregrounds the belief that art encompasses great potential for the people and it can affect the quality of life, as well as people’s attitudes toward life.²⁹ More importantly, the power of the arts lies in their experiential nature which activates a person’s mind, body and senses; thus, it creates an impact of great density. The result of such an experience is, according to Efthymiou-Tsekoura, a person ready to actively receive, perceive and participate in life experiences, in other words, active, instead of passive.

Efthymiou-Tsekoura also referred to a major contradiction of the situation regarding dance in the country:

In this world of technology and progress the body is progressively less active in our everyday life, at the same time so many people are

²⁸ Denny Efthymiou-Tsekoura was Director of the State School of Dance from 1990 to 1999. She is a graduate of the Jooss - Leeder School and she was a teacher of modern technique at the State School of Dance from 1976 to 1988.

²⁹ An attempt to balance the intellectual and rational aspects of educational curriculum was the educational programme ‘Melina’, initiated in 1995 by the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Culture and the General Secretariat of Popular Education. The programme aimed at “the elevation of a cultural dimension in education and the revival of the daily school action with the indissoluble power of Art and Culture” (Paizis and Theodoridis, 1995: 13). The pedagogical framework and philosophy of the project were based on a combination of cognitive, experiential and emotional dimensions of educational practice (Paizis and Theodoridis, 1995: 14). Responsible for dance in the ‘Melina’ program was Denny Efthymiou-Tsekoura, and several teachers, choreographers and dancers were included in the team of collaborators.

involved in bodily activities. In every corner of Athens there is a dance school, a gym or a sport center.

Efthymiou-Tsekoura, 1994: 312

According to her argument, underlying this dichotomy is the belief that dances could provide a site for resisting the consequences of urban life and technological development which threaten to make the body passive, that being the inherent contradiction of progress. The body is presented as the last shelter of human existence in the midst of technological progress, and at the same time, it becomes the vital prerequisite for human action and communication. For some dancers, members of the examined companies, dance's associations with vitality and action were also relevant to their own sense of self and practice in the companies. For example, Aggeliki Stellatou, co-founder of Edafos Company argued:

Dance, and the company was the place I wanted to be. We wanted to present our work. It was a deep need, which made me feel good. It was the situation that I wanted to be, because I felt better than anywhere else.

Stellatou, 2010 [non-print]

In addition, many dancers and choreographers argued that their feeling of belonging to a group was very important for their art in general, and for their self-identity (Topalidou, 2010 [non-print]; Kallinikidou, 2008 [non-print]; Sotiriou & Baka, 2007 [non-print]; Papachristou, 2008 [non-print]; Stellatou, 2010 [non-print]).

Dancing bodies in Greece were seen primarily as expressive and communicative means and as vehicles of non-verbal communication. As such, dance has claimed to overcome language barriers, ethnic divisions and national borders and unite

people by communicating in a direct and truthful way (Ananiadis, et al., 2001; Vounelaki, 1996a). Greek society and culture were deeply conservative towards the body, an attitude arising from the traditional Western dichotomy of mind and body. This dichotomy was further intensified by Christian Orthodox beliefs, which undermined bodily expressions and reinforced divisions between rational/irrational, culture/nature, male/female, socially acceptable/socially unacceptable (Tsoutsoura, 2004: 16).

In terms of ideas, these discourses recall philosophical ideas stemming from American dance modernism. According to Gay Morris, modernism in dance, as expressed in the theories of John Martin (1893–1985), Edwin Denby (1903–1983) and John Cage (1912–1992) was based on a belief that dance's corporeal intelligence was an oppositional force to the rationalisation of contemporary society. Rationalisation of society meant calculation of a means to an end, which was often related to economic imperatives and commercialism. For dance modernism, the use of the body as dance's agency secured the communication between dance and its audience in a powerful and direct way, which could liberate them from the tyranny of logic (Morris, 2006: 64–86).

On the other hand, during the 1990s in Greece, dance was gradually becoming a stronger part of mass and pop culture, evident in everyday life. A large number of people attended dance classes in amateur dance schools and enjoyed the experience of moving and dancing in the studios (Vounelaki, 1996a [online]; Efthymiou-Tsekoura, 1994). Private television channels started to broadcast TV shows, which included choreographies and dance sections to pop songs or Greek

music. These became extremely popular and attracted high levels of spectatorship. Dance entered a great number of homes and families even though in a way that reinforced stereotypical perspectives on dance as entertainment. Consequently, an increased number of people became familiar with a particular aesthetic of viewing dance, that of spectacle and exhibitionism.

The dance groups performing to popular songs or accompanying singers in their live shows, as well as the choreographies performed, were called 'ballets', indicating a complete misunderstanding of this art form in common language. Peculiarly enough, these 'ballets' were often performed, for economic reasons, by male ballet dancers, mostly of Albanian origin, while they were members of the ballet company of the National Opera House, (Hassiotis, 1999: 42–44). As a consequence, ballet was a contested term, signifying two completely different concepts of dance: that of entertainment and that of a form of high culture.

Dancing was also part of youth culture in clubs, rave parties and music concerts, an area of culture that has been flourishing since the 1980s.³⁰ This exposure to dance experiences and bodily involvement emphasised the use of the body in young people's self-expression. Without arguing for a clear link between youth culture and contemporary dance, this research suggests that the expansion of dance experiences and the increased bodily sensibility have contributed to dance's symbolic empowerment, and affected the way body movement is appreciated, for there were more 'movement literate' members of the audience.

³⁰ Indicative of the 'right to party' climate were the demonstrations organized in Athens in 1994 by a number of young people complaining about new regulations regarding clubs' working hours. On the other hand, moral panic about rave culture and rave parties became evident in sections of Greek society, and it was represented in television and press coverage.

In addition, dance in popular culture became an important site for identity formation, as part of a person's way of living, as it was in the contemporary dance companies examined in this thesis, as the artists themselves argue (Stellatou, 2010 [non-print]; Topalidou, 2010 [non-print]; Giatrakou, 2007 [non-print]; Papachristou, 2008 [non-print]). It is therefore a cultural moment when the body acquires intense cultural power and significance, as a site of identification, manipulation and desire.

In addition to the issues already discussed, the last section of this chapter examines a major problem of both dance practices and cultural policy. That is, the relation and re-activation of a notion of the 'hellenic' as a reference to dance heritage, to national identity and a/or to contemporary cultural identity.

2.3.3. Dance in Greece, dance history and conceptualisations of the 'hellenic': an overview

The relationship between Greek dance and dance history is long and complex, exemplifying a variety of different uses of the notion of Greek dance and diverse historical conceptualisations and ideological meanings. The viewpoints adapted in this section examine this complexity from the perspective of, firstly, the history of ballet and modern dance, secondly, from the perspective of the connection between dance and the Greek nation-state and finally, from the perspective of the history of contemporary dance in Greece in the 20th century. All these perspectives intersect with one another and indicate a shifting historical and

ideological manipulation and imagining of the notion of the 'hellenic' in dance, by both Greek and non-Greek artists.

Ancient Greek dance, or rather the 'idea' of the ancient Greek and Roman dancer, has been an extraordinarily powerful fascination of theatrical and choreographic practices in the history of dance (Macintosh, 2010: 1-15). In a traditional dance history book, dance in Greece is included within those early sections referring to the origins of the phenomenon of dance. Ancient Greek dances, especially the dances of ancient drama, are regarded as part of an evolutionary process of Western dance through the centuries (Sachs, 1963 [1937]; Kraus, 1969; Kirstein, 1987[1935]; Lawson, 1973). Ancient Greek dance has a secure place within traditional dance history and, consequently, unquestionable value. The consequences are twofold: Western dance historians create a pedigree for dance, and Greek dance acquires symbolic value important for its own future conceptualisation and representation.

On the other hand, contemporary – not ancient – dance of Greece, and its relation to international dance history, has been approached mainly by anthropologists who examined folk dance. Greek people were seen, and subsequently, they started to see themselves, as descendants of the ancient Greeks and this rhetoric was the political, ideological and historical argument which helped the formation of the Greek nation-state.

The central issue in Ours once More. Folklore, Ideology, and the Making of Modern Greece (1982) by anthropologist Michael Herzfeld is the examination of

ways that the Greek nation-state had constructed a sense of national identity in its early days (the late 19th century). It examines the influence of competing ideologies on the selection of relevant ethnographic material, dances among them, by the Greek folklorists, in their attempt to provide a theoretical justification for a political action, namely the creation of the Greek nation-state.

The crucial ideological issue was the premise of cultural continuity from ancient to contemporary Greece, an enterprise supported and fostered by the folklorists (laographoi). In that sense, folklorists played a crucial role in the ideological construction of the new Greek nation-state (Herzfeld, 1982). Under this ideological concept, folklorists created a 'pan-Hellenic repertory' of dances, a 'neutral index' of national dances, erasing the differences, perplexities and peculiarities of the dances in relation to their social and local context, and consequently, a repertory of selected dances was connected to national identity.

On the other hand, the genesis of the *ballet de cour* in 16th-century France with the production of *Le Ballet Comique de la Reine* in 1581 has been claimed as an effort to combine music, poetry and dance based on the model of ancient Greek theatre (Nordera, 2007, 19-31; Lee, 2002; Lawson, 1973; 39-40; Koegler, 1987 [1977], 33). Ancient Greek dance became the prototype for ballet composition, and the mythological themes explored allowed the communication of meaning at a number of levels: the spectacular, the social and the cosmic. In this way, the use of myth became the vehicle for a reflection of the political demand of consensus and order (Nordera, 2007: 21).

For the 18th-century *ballet de action*, whose aim was to narrate a story without the spoken word of the opera but relying on the communicative potential of movements, the Aristotelian idea of dance as mimetic action and its development by Roman pantomime helped dance theorists and choreographers to conceptualise and legitimate their activity. Ballet by the end of the 18th century had acquired high cultural status and this became possible through “the ancient example as both guide and legitimizing authority” (Macintosh, 2010: 2).

In addition to ballet, modern dance also made use of references to a range of ideas on the ‘hellenic’. At the beginning of the 20th century, modern dance was created by artists who were opposed to ballet. Ancient Greek dance provided a means for liberating the body and soul from the repressive forces of society. For Isadora Duncan, in particular, ancient Greece was a means of legitimising her dance as ‘high art’ (Daly, 1995: 110). Duncan found in Greece a rhetorical and performative strategy for a ‘natural’ body which was ‘white’ and ‘civilised’ as opposed to ‘black’ and ‘primitive’ (Daly, 1995: 90). She managed to animate the cultural fantasy of her American upper-class audience who were also looking for a pedigreed past for their new nation (new as compared to the old Europe) (Daly, 1995, 102).

The idea of the ancient dancer for other modern dance artists was envisioned in different ways. For Ted Shawn, for example, and his Men Dancers, the reference to the Greek ideal was a legitimising strategy, as long as this concept allowed him to show his dancers as ‘he-man’ and thus to confront social prejudice against gay men (Manning, 1998: 34-37; Foulkes, 2001: 115-146). In the late 19th and early

20th centuries, attitudes towards the ancient Greek and Roman dancer encompassed wider anxieties about gender and race. Under this perspective, both Duncan and Shawn share the same concerns.

In the second half of the 20th century, there was a turn from an ideological – be it gender, race or other – imagining of ancient dance towards a play with multiple meanings and readings of ancient Greek themes. Developments in philosophical thought, such as post-structuralism and postmodernism, opened the way for artists to explore and play with the layers of significance an ancient theme might have, or to explore its tropes of theatrical representation; in other words, to investigate how the mechanism of an imagined ancient dancer could facilitate contemporary artistic exploration and fascination.

In relation to Greek art, literary scholar Dimitris Tziovas (2006 [online]) explored the idea of the ‘hellenic’ as used in literature and the visual arts. Tziovas argues that the idea of the ‘hellenic’ refers to ways that Greek intellectuals and artists approached their past, and he discerns four models: the symbolic or archeological, the romantic, the aesthetic or modernist, and the ironic or postmodern. In the first model, the assumption is that a gap exists between classic past and the present. This gap can be symbolically bridged through imitations of the past or reconstructions.

According to the second, the romantic view, the past is living today through its traces in folk culture and it evokes nostalgia for the loss of the authentic past. The aesthetic or modernist model shares with the romantic its belief in the vividness of

the past in the present. Unlike it, however, it does not approach the past from a historical perspective but from the point of view of an aesthetic or transformational relationship. The important point is that the past can provide archetypes, such as myths, which can be creatively approached in the present. It is a dialogue between past and present, in which memory plays a crucial role. According to Tziovas, 'the generation of the 1930s' (see footnote 9, p. 68) managed to conceive this dialogue of past and present as also a dialogue between tradition and modernity, Greece and Europe. Finally, the forth model, rewrites the past by reflective reconstruction.

As discussed earlier in the chapter, Palmer's efforts to reconstruct the dance of the ancient drama fit the first model. Pratsika envisioned dance related to ancient Greece through rhythm as a way of experiencing a transcendental Greek spirit which could provide mind-body cultivation and is linked to the second strand of Tziova's argument. Finally Manou's embrace of the 'hellenic' as, a rhetoric for legitimising her art as serious, but also for playing in accordance with Cold War politics and with the vision of historical continuity of the country, can be related to the third model.

Regarding the three companies examined in Chapters 4 to 6, the idea of 'hellenic' dance is relevant to discourses of Europeanisation and cultural policy and refers to notions of originality and authenticity as markers of difference within a global context.

Greek culture is the only or the greatest, I could say, means of defence and attack for the survival of Hellenism... Within the palimpsest of Greek Culture through the centuries, the art of dance has a prominent

place...[For] dance is connected to the origins of mankind, the roots of Greek art...ancient drama, rhythm, harmony...

Foteas, 1992: 7–8

Panagiotis Foteas, the General Secretary of the Ministry of Culture clearly describes the reasons for any State support for dance, and, in addition, he expresses the mission of the arts within global or European contexts. His speech foregrounds the idea of the Greek nation as expressed in the case of dance.

This diachronic historical agent constituted the fundamental premise of traditional Greek historiography in general (Kitromilidis, 2004: 51), and it captured and expressed a wider political and ideological orientation, that had consequences for culture and the arts. Historian Antonis Liakos (2004: 53–65) argues that each art (though he did not mention dance) through its own media has created a version of historical continuity of the nation in aesthetic and artistic terms.

These cultural versions of historical continuity became hegemonic, not only because they were embodied in all arts forms, but also because they were adapted by a wide range of intellectuals, right and left.³¹ Finally, Liakos suggests that this conceptual schema of continuity was revitalised in the arts and historiography of the 1990s, within a general re-awakening of nationalism(s) due to the historical conditions after 1989, and especially the ‘balkanisation’ of the countries of the Balkan peninsula (Liakos in Kitromilidis, ed. 2004: 53–65). Tzartzani in her research (2007) examines contemporary dance in Greece as serving a similar function of expressing common national characteristics, and her analysis

³¹ Examples of these perspectives are the use of Greek language as an evidence of continuity through the centuries, the connection of historical figures from different periods based on their shared characteristics, such as resistance to authoritarian power, or their struggle for freedom.

interrogates the ways in which dance has constructed its own historiography of national(istic) continuity (see pp. 23 - 24).

Other authors, however, argue for a different perspective. Social anthropologist Marika Rombou-Levidi advocated in 1992 that a problem of contemporary dance in the country was its lack of a “distinctive Greek language, relevant to the characteristics of our culture...and having its own recognizable identity” (Rombou-Levidi, 1992: 44). Choreographer Eleftheria Kouroupi, similarly argued for the lack of a recognisable (Greek) identity in dance, and went on to add that the aim of such an identity would be to present “authentic and original creations, in line with international artistic standards and able to survive in time” (Kouroupi, 1995: 319). This range of different perspectives on dance and identity framed, both the creation and reception of dance in the 1990s, as well as dance policy (see Foteas’s argument above).

This research argues that, even though, the notion of national continuity was a dominant ideological force in the 1990s, it was not the only ideological concept within the discourses affecting dance. The notion of modernisation, a prominent concept of the times, was not only a concept related to national issues, but it also related to notions of change, rupture or negation rather than continuity. For that reason, in the next chapter of the thesis, the explanation focuses on the notion of modernisation and the tensions that it brings.

2.4. Conclusion

Contemporary dance developed in Greece in the first decades of the 20th century and was a site for negotiated female, national and class identities. Dance as an art form was mainly related to ideas and narrative so as to lose its body materiality, either by focusing on a philosophy of life within which dance was placed or by being positioned within a national rhetoric. However, after the dictatorship, dance's physicality became a powerful site for exposing the repression of the previous years, shifting the focus from the content of a work to its material bodies.

Ballet and modern dance have created a series of discourses regarding actual dancing bodies, national characteristics and dance genres, which perpetuated an economy of competition within the dance field for half a century. On the other hand, the 1990s saw an expansion of body practices in everyday life and pop culture and an increase in the role of the body in processes of identification, which, by implication, affected dance perception, as the number of physically literate audience members increased. In addition to these social changes, the belief in dance's communicative potential shifted the focus from dance as a narrative theatrical form (as in Manou's case) to dancing bodies as personal and social sites of being-in-the-world.

Finally, this chapter suggested that among the different conceptualisations of the notion of 'hellenic', its links to an outward promotion of the contemporary identity of the country and its culture played a crucial role in the context of Europe's unification. For that reason, State cultural policy and socio-political

aspects of Greece in relation to European integration are the focus of investigation in Chapter 3, which also provides a context for the case studies which follow in Chapters 4 to 6.

CHAPTER 3

THE SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT IN THE 1990s

3.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the social, political and economic contexts of the mid-1990s, with a special interest in the notion of modernisation as a social and cultural process and the politics of state dance funding as it was affected, among other factors, by the processes of Europeanisation. The examination argues that the notion of modernisation in socio-political terms was crucial for capturing the need for renewal expressed in dance as a denial or critique of dance's heritage by dance artists. In addition, the chapter suggests that the role of the state is important for dance production and reception, for it provides the necessary resources and it has implications for dance's symbolic value, public prestige and legitimacy through the funding system. In addition, such a framework is historically contingent and affects the agents' possible repertoire of ideas and practices. These issues set a general framework for the interplay of dance, politics, and economics within which my focus is concentrated on the three particular dance works examined in chapters 4 to 6.

Chapter 3 is divided into three parts. The first part (section 3.2) is concerned with the political and social developments and discourses in Greece that created the context of modernisation within which the contemporary dance of the country operated. The second section (3.3) addresses issues of cultural policy and dance funding as determining factors for dance practice, while the last section (3.4)

provides an overview of the resources and material conditions for dance production in the early 1990s.

3.2. The modernisation of the country and the role of culture

In order to explore the political, social and cultural contexts of the mid-1990s, and to interpret the shifts which occurred in ideological, symbolic and practical dimensions of life, this section examines the period beginning after the restoration of democracy in 1974 until the 1990s and the complex set of ideas relevant to the notion of modernisation.

According to political scientist Giannis Voulgaris, the importance of 'metapolitefsi' (meaning political change or a new political regime) is indicated by the fact that a political event – the change from dictatorship to democracy (1974) – was a term used to designate a whole period within which processes of modernisation as political, governmental, economic and ideological change occurred. 'Metapolitefsi' as a period was characterised by democratic and civil rights reforms, social welfare politics and educational changes. It was a period of great hope, characterised by a lively political climate and a massive interest and involvement in politics (Demertzis, 1994; Sevastakis, 2004). In terms of political parties, New Democracy (ND) – a centre-right party – was leading the country during the first years of 'metapolitefsi' (1974-1981). The Panhellenic Socialist

Party (PASOK) – a socialist party – won the elections in 1981 and it was in power until 2004, with an interruption between 1989-1993.¹

The middle of the 80s, is marked by transition to a new period. According to Voulgaris:

...the mid-80s was a pivotal period for the ideological climate of the Greek society. It is no coincidence that it, then, began the discussion about the ‘end of metapolitefsi’ [end of the political changeover]. At the same time, a substantial change in attitudes and behaviour was evident. The hegemony of traditional left culture came to an end and the stereotypes [of class politics] lost their power. Instead, it was replaced by a sense of realistic liberalism and narcissistic consumerism.

Voulgaris, 2002: 281

Voulgaris relates the ‘end of metapolitefsi’ to a shift to neo-liberal attitudes, neo-conservative values, and economic growth for the upper-middle urban class. He further identifies this shift as a critical demystification of the culture of ‘metapolitefsi’ which, according to his argument, was expressed through three movements: an opposition to state intervention and the dominance of political parties; an insistence on personal autonomy, authenticity and creativity; and a glorification of individualism as a prerequisite for personal, social and economic development (Voulgaris, 2008: 330). All these changes are set within a framework of changes related to the modernisation process of the country as expressed in the 1990s.

¹ During the same period in Europe other socialist governments also took power. In France, Francois Mitterrand was elected President also in 1981, in Spain, Felipe González was elected in 1982 and Mário Alberto Nobre Lopes Soares was elected in Portugal in 1983. This socialist front of the Southern Europe played a crucial role in PASOK’s politics and rhetoric during the 1980s. Such an example is the Greek Memorandum to the EU which set the conditions to future enlargement and demanded the implementation of the ‘Integrated Mediterranean Programmes’ designed to assist Mediterranean countries (Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002: 105)

Modernisation has been used in sociology as a concept referring to the “effects of economic development on traditional social structures and values” and it is related to industrialisation, growth of science and technology, urbanization, the modern nation state and capitalist world market (Featherstone, 1991: 6). The process of modernisation in Greece has been seen as a major issue since the constitution of the contemporary Greek nation state in the 19th century, for “the country imported its political institutions from the West (royalty, parliamentarianism, centralization)” (Keridis, 1997: 89). Modernisation has, often, been understood as the relation between Greece and Europe or the West in general, for “Greek mainstream political ideology has been dominated by the desire to catch up with the advanced West” (Keridis, 1987: 89).

Modernisation processes acquire different meanings in different historical moments in Greece, but also, they have been explored through different methodological and ideological perspectives (Voulgaris, 2008: 348-349). For example, in the 1960s anthropologists studied Greece adopting a structuralist approach, supporting that the country was being closer to traditional societies rather than modern European nation-states (see also p. 87).

In the 1980s, anthropologists such as Michael Herzfeld (1982, 1987) examined Greece and its people as being in the midst of a constructed image oscillating between an outward-directed national image, named the Hellenic model, and an inward-looking image, the Romeic model. In the Hellenic model the ideal was the ancient Greek glory, whereas in the Romeic model the Orthodox Christian

tradition was the key point. Hence, Greek identity and socio-historical process were examined through a dual perspective, in which the Romeic model is often equated with the everyday experience and the Hellenic, with the official culture. Herzfeld, furthermore, suggested that this dual model often provides the possibilities for resistance.

On the other hand in political theory, neoliberal perspectives on modernisation saw traditional values, such as family and locality, to be problematic for the emergence of the new modernised individual in Greece. Political culture was conceived as a combination of two competing cultural traditions, one western and modern and the other, eastern and parochial, forming a perspective of Greece as dual society (an argument similar in its binary logic to Herzfeld's perspective mentioned above). A major proponent of such a view is the political scientist Nikiforos Diamandouros (1993: 4) who suggests that Greek society is constituted by the 'underdog culture', which is anti-western, traditionalist and with a clientist attitude, and the 'modernisers' inspired by Enlightenment and liberal ideals. These two cultures cut across society and history, without being exclusively identified with one particular political party, leading to an ambivalence of Greek social attitudes towards modernisation, but also, at the late 20th century, towards Europe and the European Union (Gropas & Triandafyllidou, 2009 [online]: 1-4).

Since the 1970s, a neo-marxist model started to be applied by several social and political scientists in examining the issue of modernisation. Constantinos Tsoukalas, an important exponent of this approach, pays attention to the "normative, even expected and inevitable dependence of the peripheral social

formations” (Tsoukalas, 1981: 39) to Western centres of power, arguing for a typical form through which peripheral countries are incorporated into the global capitalist market (Tsoukalas, 1981). Under this theoretical perspective the relationship between tradition and modernisation is conceived not as a conflict between Western and Eastern trends, but instead, as a relationship of dependence and exploitation between the centre/metropolises of capitalism and the periphery of the system, expressed through particular and ideological constructed stereotypes. In contrast to neoliberals who approach the tradition-modernisation issue as a positive transition from parochial conditions (traditionalism) to a progressive development (modernisation) under the forces of global economy, neo-marxists see a power gap between centre and periphery that reproduces inequality and constructs the tradition-modernisation tension at the first place.

Focusing on the historical conditions of the 1990s in Greece, modernisation had a close link to Europeanisation,² defined as the process which describes “the impact of EU membership or prospective membership upon political systems, society and economy in general of the member states” (Ioakimidis, 2001 [online]: 1). In the case of Greece, political scientist Panayiotis Ioakimidis argues that Europeanisation was “an external power source and stimuli for advancing economic, social and political modernisation” adapted by the political elites (Ioakimidis, 2001 [online]: 2) . Explaining his argument further he suggests that there are two types of Europeanisation processes, the responsive and the intended. The first one, refers to cases where the process of Europeanisation forms a response to the processes of European integration, while intended Europeanisation

² Greece joined the European Union in 1981.

refers to intended and purposeful process to transfer governance patterns related to European integration into the political systems of countries, such as for example in Greece, Spain or Portugal (Ioakimidis, 2001 [online]: 2).

Political scientists Michalis Psimitis and Nikolas Sevastakis (2005) argue that modernisation as expressed in public discourses in the country can be described within three frameworks: as processes of integration within the European Union, as processes of change affecting the political sphere and political culture, and as processes of bureaucratic reforms of public sector. In addition, they discern two ideological models applied within this general framework; the first one, implemented in the 1980s by the Socialist government, which they call ‘social-democratic reform’. The second ideological model was implemented by the Socialist government in the 1990s, and the authors describe it as ‘neo-liberal experimentation’ (2005: 65). This division points to different ideological and socio-economic conceptualizations of modernisation, which both have been applied in Greece. In particular, the first model had a social and even populist character of reform, while the second had an economic and market imperative (Psimitis & Sevastakis, 2002: 65), but both have implications for culture and dance (see below pp. 122 - 138).

According to political scientist Christos Lyritzis, this shift from a socialist-populist period to a managerial and technocratic approach was a major change in the Socialist Party’s (PASOK) rationale, which was expressed in an “all packed project for modernisation, rationalisation and Europeanisation of the Greek society and economy during the 1993-2004 period” (Lyritzis, 2005 [online]: 250).

Hence, notions of modernisation, Europeanisation and rationalisation are often used interchangeably in public discourses of the period, referring mainly to economic and administrative reforms. However, what these socio-political discourses share with dance of the 1990s is the expression of change, the need for opening to influences and exchanges and a sense of critical awareness about all these contextual conditions and the artists' active involvement. Modernisation of the country is thus related to modernisation of dance not in a straightforward manner but it is rather relevant to a diverse range of processes of envisioning the dancing body according to a new model. How each company in particular, conceived, explored and approached this new model is analysed in chapters 4 to 6.

These processes of modernisation reveal that a complex process of transformation was underway in the country in the 1990s, which brought new social forces to the fore. A new upper-middle class demanded centrality and social power in the public sphere, and used the media and consumer culture as its means of political power (Sevastakis, 2004: 19; Voulgaris, 2008: 158–159; Komninou, 2001: 179).

In addition, post-1989 Balkan conditions and the war in the former Yugoslavia forced hundreds of people to become refugees. Greece was a point of destination or at least temporary shelter for many of them; hence, in 1993, the estimated number of immigrants and refugees was between 523,000 and 603,000 (Petrinioti, 1993: 18-19). The number of refugees, foreign policy problems³ and the decision

³ A major problem of foreign policy in the early 1990s was the tension created between Greece and FYROM. After the declaration of independence by the former Yugoslav Republic in September 1991, FYROM claimed the right to use the name Macedonia. This claim was based on the cultural, historical and linguistic grounds that a Macedonian minority existed in northern Greece. Greece's objections launched diplomatic offensives and initiated economic blockades.

of the International Olympic Committee to select Atlanta rather than Athens to host the centennial 1996 Olympic Games, which was, in symbolic terms, a major disappointment, contributed to a national identity crisis (Calotychos, 2003: 2-5).

These facts foregrounded a pragmatic failure of several strategies relevant to the external and internal symbolic images of the country, its power and ideologies. Most importantly, Greece had to reconsider its identity and symbolic narratives in relation to the changing conditions of the times. The overstatement of ancient past and heritage seemed to be inappropriate in this context and different strategies had to be invented and implemented. Anthropologist James Faubion argues that this crisis was the crash of the “significant primacy of the past” and the “fragmented diversity of the past and present” (1993: xxi). In this sense, the urgency of artists to free themselves from the past and to explore their own creative language may help explain the ‘dance explosion’ of the 1990s as a space for constructing new images of the self and re-envisioning history. Moreover, international dance developments and knowledge, such as new dance techniques, inspired artists to explore new possibilities in their work.

Conflicting forces in value systems and public opinion were expressed in two forms: either through a glorification of the ‘contemporary’ as the basis for a sense of national confidence, or a nostalgia for an [imagined] past of strong Greek identity as the basis of a national melancholia (Sevastakis, 2004: 21–22).

Many Greek citizens perceived FYROM’s claims as a falsification of Greece’s history and as a territorial claim upon the part of Macedonia that was incorporated into Greece in 1912-1913. FYROM’s position fostered mass demonstrations in Greece and foregrounded a crisis of national identity expressed by a number of Greek citizens and politicians, and increased evidence of nationalist rhetoric.

Following Benedict Anderson's notion of imagined communities (Anderson, 1991 [1983]), Sevastakis describes both narratives as inventions. Furthermore, this dual vision towards a nostalgic national past and a modernised future as integral to neohellenic identity (Axelos, 1995; Diamandouros, 2000), was disseminated by the new dominant players of the public sphere, the media and the new upper-middle class (Sevastakis, 2004: 61; Vamvakas, 2006; Komninou, 2001). More importantly, though, it had an ideological orientation: an a-historical version of history, a history stripped of any sense of radicalism or social struggle (Sevastakis, 2004: 61; Liakos, 2001 [online]).

The notion of the contemporary for the artists signified a distance from, and distaste for, the past as heritage and a lack of interest in national identity. Until the early 1980s, contemporary dance, according to Tzartzani, relied on an endorsement of a 'national consensus' based on a national imagining of Greek antiquity. Younger artists responded to this situation by expressing their personal artistic and social visions outside this frame (2007: 20). Tzartzani identifies this direction as post-national and anthropocentric – in the sense of focusing on the individual – and the result of the impact of globalisation and market forces gathering momentum from the 1980s onwards (2007: 277).

The importance of culture for the goal of European integration is also stressed by political scientists (Katsoulis, Giannitsis & Kazakos, 1998) and official documents of the European Union, such as the Maastricht Treaty. Hence, the national project takes on a new identity under the light of Europeanisation and globalisation, in which cultural policy could play an important role. Stressing this

argument further, the role of the body within culture and politics comes to the fore.

It is definitely the need of a generation to express itself through the body beyond the codes of the past, but at the same time, the need to re-examine, in contemporary terms, the relation between audience and creator.

Papaioannou cited in Vounelaki, 1998: z4

Postmodern conditions can eliminate the political individual...because they erase the body-politic, the lived body of political action...

Elefandis, 1998: 496

The first quotation from the choreographer Dimitris Papaioanou of Edafos Company vividly reveals how dance artists claimed to put the body at the centre of their action. This is crucial not only because dance uses human bodies as its means, but also because the body seems to possess all the driving energy and urgency for those artists, in that particular historical moment. This observation drives my argument in exploring the conditions framing the choreographed body in contemporary Greek dance and its historical and political dynamics.

The second quotation by Angelos Elefandis, a left intellectual and journalist, is from an article first published in June 1995, in which he stresses the 'bodilessness' [sic] of politics. Elefandis argues that there was an absence of real bodies in the public sphere in the 1990s, in contrast to the political demonstrations of the post-dictatorship period in Greece.

He describes an introverted attitude of the people who withdrew from public and collective political action and returned to their private sphere and individual

home. “Privacy, the private, individualism and above all non-politics is the reduction of the senses, of mind and body into only one dimension: sight, vision” (Elefandis, 1998: 496–497). Elefandis argues that withdrawing from the public sphere, people started to substitute ‘real’ life and action with TV viewing. Instead of active citizens, they became passive masses; instead of agents, they became spectators. In addition, his assumption relates this social behaviour with a sensorial atrophy, an immobilisation of the body and the senses.

Social research in Greece has shown that during the 1990s, the interest in participation and concern about political commitment decreased (Charalambidis, Maratou-Alipranti & Hadjiyanni, eds., 2006 [online]). Sevastakis, focusing on the symbolic and ideological content of the phenomenon, stressed that:

[A] major characteristic...is the diffusion of social representations that do not make any reference to history or the concept of the ‘people’. The ‘people’ are represented as a subject without any competitiveness; in other words, today’s people or the people of modernisation do not, anymore, represent the underprivileged social classes and strata.

Sevastakis, 2004: 13–14

Sevastakis shifts the interest from the actual participation of people, or lack of it, to the ideology of representations of the people. The problem is, according to Sevastakis, that the notion and representation of the ‘people’ in public discourse has changed. Contrary to past images, the notion of the ‘people’ has been stripped from its historical and class references and the rhetoric which saw people as powerful social agents capable of social and political change has been abandoned.

What Elefandis and Sevastakis claim, then, is the diffusion of conceptualisations of the social subject as passive and without historical or sociological alliances.

The political value of such representations lies in their diffused position in relation to the discourses of power. These arguments reveal how subjectivities were prescribed in public discourses, and set the conditions within which dancing bodies became sites for exploring alternative conceptions, such as collective identities (SineQuaNon), cosmopolitan subjects (Oktana Dancetheatre) or gay subjectivities (Edafos Company).

Papaioannou's statement is juxtaposed to the attitude expressed by Elefandis, as it refers to artists whose active bodies are their means of expression. In this sense, dancers, choreographers, clubbers and other embodied individuals, bring their own embodied participation and presence at the centre of their way of life, contrary to the argument by Elefandis. Furthermore, Papaioannou's call for a re-examination of the encounter of audience and creation implies an activation of possible ways through which a dance performance could affect its audience by awakening senses other than vision (see chapter 6). However, considering the two arguments together, the crucial and ambiguous role of the body and its socio-political significance is stressed, and hence, this point is pivotal for investigating the role of dance works of the period.

My argument is that the works and the period under examination are the site of several tensions. Firstly, different conceptualizations of modernisation in the economic and in the cultural field had implications for the production, reception and distribution of dance. This is especially relevant for dance, as state funding was the main source of finance for dance production, and cultural policy was related to economic support from EU.

Secondly, there was a proliferation of media and commercial culture pervaded by a consumerist and capitalist logic (Sevastakis, 2004; Komninou, 2001) within which the dancing body was presented as a commodity for pleasure and entertainment. Against this perception, the examined companies were proposing seriousness of purpose and attempting to create a different mode of communication between audience and performers. Finally, the period is characterized by the efforts of a cultural elite to build its own culture, mainly through classical music and the Athens Concert Hall (Halaris & Plios, 1996; Hassiotis, 2001, see pp. 145 - 146), within which dance had started to be included. The problem with these efforts was their tendency to support conventional rather than experimental art, and use their social power to create a dominant culture. As a consequence, difficulties might have resulted for artists and projects that did not fit with such a perspective.

The process of modernisation in economic and political terms was envisaged as a future-oriented project: if the country could follow European models of reform, it could be transformed into a contemporary 20th century European country (Allison & Nikolaidis, 1997). Yet, in cultural terms, the cornerstone of the country's cultural profile, as expressed by the Ministry of Culture and the major cultural projects of the period (see pp. 127- 129 and footnote 14 on p. 128), was bound to be a retrospective vision of a selective national past, mainly classical antiquity, and no other period of the country's history, such as, for example, the post-civil war era. In this vision the notion of present moment is missing. It is absent and it

seems insignificant, or it is conceived as a temporal transition from the past to the future.

Dance in Greece had a problematic relationship with the notion of ‘now’, and as such, it sits uncomfortably in the middle of the above scheme. The absence of the present moment in the logic of the country’s modernisation process has two ramifications: there are practical implications for the material conditions of dance production as a consequence of the particular dance policy (see pp. 130 - 146). Furthermore, there are ideological and discursive consequences which affect the production and reception of dance. How dance was conceived, what it was expected to offer in the public sphere, how it was expected to relate or not with other areas of culture and society, are issues which are framed by the above-described antithesis. In this research, then, dance is examined not as a clear effect of the process of modernisation, but rather as a process and product of an encounter with notions of past and future.

3.3. Cultural policy

The notion of cultural policy requires some explanation, as it depends on the meanings of ‘culture’ and ‘policy’. Authors have identified the notion of culture in a general, broad sense as a way of life and as a narrower notion which refers to art (Williams, 1977: 11-20; Lewis & Miller, 2002: 3; McGuigan, 2002: 23). Tony Bennett, however, approaches culture from the perspective of Cultural Policy Studies, arguing for another notion of culture understood as:

a historically specific set of institutionally embedded relations of government in which forms of thought and conduct of extended populations are targeted for transformation.

Bennett, 1992: 26

Bennett, under the influence of Michel Foucault and his concept of governmentality as “the way in which the modern state began to worry about individuals” (Foucault, 1991: 4), stresses the institutional aspect of culture rather than its conception as a ‘way of life’. In this sense, he insists on issues of power and regulation which are implicated in institutional apparatuses.

Lewis and Miller (2002) suggest that, in the latter case, there are two rhetorical positions which define the rationale of cultural policy. The first position sees the market as a system that identifies public preferences and the state as playing the role of the police, that is, to protect the rights of property. The second position identifies certain artifacts as having transcendental value and being worth protecting. However, an attempt to reconcile the two approaches can be found in many countries when culture is bound up with questions of national identity. Hence, cultural policy is also “a means of governance, of formatting public collective subjectivity”, forming the identity of the cultural citizens of the country through “the maintenance and development of cultural lineage via education, custom, language, religion” and other apparatuses (Lewis and Miller, 2002: 1–5).

The idea of state intervention in culture has been historically associated with social democratic conditions in the Western European nation states of the post-World War II era. A particular perspective on economic logic, namely the Keynesian model, proposed by the British economist John Maynard Keynes

(1883–1946)⁴ promoted public investment in public services and arts as a means of securing public wellbeing and expressing the welfare state’s principles in the domain of culture (McGuigan, 1996: 2004).⁵ Such interventions were believed to promote enlightenment for all, based on a political vision of the state as the regulator and educator of the society, aiming at the cultivation of its citizens.

The dramatic transformation of capitalism after the economic crisis of the 1970s (technological and media expansion and the globalisation of market forces) and the collapse of Communism in the early 1990s intensified the rise of neo-liberalism, a phenomenon evident also in Greece. Neo-liberalism can be defined as “the revival of doctrines of the free market” (Gamble, 2001[online]: 127) and it presented a challenge to welfare perspectives on cultural policy as it created an elitist and selective cultural canon. Instead, neo-liberalism, advocating the freedom of consumers and market forces, is governed by a profit rationale and aims at a managerial operation of cultural production.

There are several models for the relationship between state intervention and culture as exemplified in different cultural policies. This typology is based on a range of factors, such as the degree of control between a central state body and its other parts (Konsola, 2006: 82–100) or the role of state intervention and its aims (Milton, 1989: 54–55). According to Milton, four different patterns of state intervention can be discerned. The Facilitator Model aims at cultural diversity and the state funds the arts through tax expenditures. The Patron Model aims at

⁴ The Keynesian model is a set of theories of modern macroeconomics, which are based on the principle that state intervention is necessary in states of high unemployment in order to stimulate growth.

⁵ State intervention in one-party governmental systems (authoritative regimes), such as the USSR, is another issue not examined here.

excellence and the state funds the arts through arm's length organisations. The Architect State fosters culture as a means for social welfare⁶ and funds arts through ministries or departments of culture. And the State as Engineer aims at political education and areas where the state owns all artistic means of production (Milton, 1989: 54–55 & 62–70).

However, these models should not be seen as strictly defined or unchangeable over time. Different historical moments, economic conditions or political priorities can affect how cultural policies are designed and implemented. In Greece during the early 1990s, the state played the role of the Architect which fostered its policy through the Ministry of Culture having a particular cultural vision as its rationale. This rationale focused on culture as heritage and the arts as a symbol of national prestige, supporting high art and elitism against popular culture, diversity, social cohesion, and access or participation (Zorba, 2009 [online]: 254).

3.3.1. Greek Cultural Policy

The Greek Ministry of Culture was founded in September 1971, during the Junta regime, under the name of the Ministry of Culture and Science. It initially included a number of departments from different ministries and its implementation meant the concentration of a range of cultural actions into one institutional state body (Konsola, 2006: 175). This strategy was part of an

⁶ The social welfare rationale recognises two categories of public goods and services worth protected by the state. The first category, namely first-rate goods, includes political and social rights, such as health, education and safety. The second category includes second-rate goods, such as culture and religion.

ideological plan on behalf of the political Junta for cultural manipulation and control, and, at the same time, as a means of constructing a public image for internal and external purposes (Konsola, 2006: 175). After the restoration of democracy in 1974, culture was relevant to the idea of general development of the country. Consistency between the Ministry's policies and the general vision of the government was pursued (Bitsaki, 2004: 23), aiming at a systematic and controlled planning and implementation of several projects.

The revision of the Greek Constitution in 1975 highlighted the interest of the state in the issue of cultural development. It was declared that “art and science, research and teaching shall be free and their development and promotion shall be an obligation of the State” (article 16 cited in Konsola, 2006: 222). Thus, political and constitutional actions responded to the demands for democratisation of the period, for, as Zorba argues, “until the late 1970s democratization was understood to be synonymous with political and civil freedoms and, in the cultural field, free expression” (2009 [online]: 256).

Cultural managers make a distinction between the notion of democratisation of culture and the notion of cultural democracy. The notion of democratisation of culture refers to a range of actions aiming at the wider dissemination of cultural products of the highest quality (high culture) to the population, despite, or with a view to countering, cultural inequalities. Examples in this direction were the initiation of a network of Municipal Regional Theatres (1983) and the National Cultural Network of Cities (1993), within which the Kalamata International Festival was founded in 1995 (see p. 134 & 141-142). On the other hand, the

notion of cultural democracy implies the merging of distinctions between high and popular culture and supporting social inclusion (Konsola, 2006: 50–52; Zorba, 2009 [online]: 257), an aim which, according to Zorba, was not achieved in Greece.

State intervention was based on the assumption that culture contributes in a positive way to citizens' quality of life and plays a crucial role in the country's prestige. In addition, the Constitution aimed to safeguard cultural pluralism and the freedom of expression to counterbalance free market conditions (Konsola, 2006: 44). However, despite the democratisation rhetoric, the agenda for cultural policy remained more attached to the excellence rationale than to the access rationale (Zorba, 2009 [online]: 256).

The Greek Constitution also determined the state's obligation to support the development and promotion of artistic creativity, and to protect the cultural environment, including the monuments and the regions and vestiges of heritage. In 1977, a Presidential Order clarified the responsibilities of the Ministry of Culture and its domain of action, within which archaeology and cultural heritage were dominant.

In particular, the responsibilities of the Ministry of Culture included the protection and valorisation of cultural heritage (archaeology and folk culture),⁷ and the support of creators in the domain of arts and letters (fine and visual arts, theatre, dance, cinema, music, and literature). Furthermore, it was the Ministry's

⁷ Exploring the British and the French State institutions for the arts, Pakes has argued for a similar heritage-based orientation in the early forms of state intervention in both countries (Pakes, 2001: 111 and 117).

responsibility to protect intellectual property rights, artistic education, local cultures and cultural diversity, to promote international cultural exchange and co-operation, and to ensure cultural accessibility to all (Dallas, 2003 [online]).

The philosophy behind the organisation of the Ministry was based on the French model and hence the cultural institution that it created “was extremely centralised and bureaucratic” (Konsola, 2006: 178). The adaptation of the French model was based on a variety of factors: the prestige of the model’s success was dominant in public discourses around culture in Greece, as is evident, for example, in the articles published in the press, such as the magazine Choros.

European issues were not irrelevant to culture of that time. In particular, a common Southern-European front of Socialist Governments (Spain, Portugal, France, Greece and Italy) was evident in Greece’s policy after the mid-1980s and formed part of a rhetoric which Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou pursued (Panagiotopoulos, no date: 197) based on a South-North conception of Europe. Finally, there is a historical and political alliance of Greece to France which was built on the fact that France was the country which hosted a number of Greek politicians, intellectuals and artists who left Greece during the post-war era and during the dictatorship (Melina Merkouri, Minister of Culture from 1981 to 1989 and from 1993 to 1994, among them).

The Greek Constitution and the Ministry of Culture legislation rely on a notion of culture mainly as heritage (ancient and folk) and as contemporary artistic creation, excluding any relation to cultural industries or popular culture. They put

contemporary creation under the protection of the state as a strategy for counterbalancing the pressures of the market and popular culture, thus promoting a vision of artistic autonomy which affected how art (and dance) was produced and perceived by artists, critics and audiences. As there are no traditions of royal or aristocratic patronage of the arts in the country, state cultural support might be better understood as the transformation of a system of state intervention which started during an authoritarian regime and changed within a democratic system. This is not, however, to underestimate the fact that state funding was the main (or, in some cases, the only) source which supported artists for their creations⁸ which otherwise might have remained unrealised.

During the 1980s, culture was related to social and economic planning, and the state started to formulate long-term cultural plans within the confines of Five-Year Programmes for Economic and Social Development.⁹ In 1983 in France, the Minister of Culture, Jacques Lang, began a programme of decentralisation in support of culture. At the same time (May 1983) and in a similar manner, Melina Merkouri, Minister of Culture of the first Socialist Government in Greece, initiated a similar programme for theatre, namely the Municipal Regional Theatres (MRT) network. It was an institutional network supported financially by the Ministry of Culture and the local municipalities for the decentralisation of culture. The initiatives for supporting cultural life outside Athens, was further

⁸ In the long term, this practice has been argued to have created artists tied to a bureaucratic logic, based on state support and thus losing their experimental potential, and also to have created an attitude on the artists' part comparable to that of state employees (Zorba, 2009 [online]). On the other hand, there is the view that this critique of state support is itself based on neo-liberal ideas and opens the way to a market orientation of the arts.

⁹ The first Five-Year Programme for Economic and Social Development was implemented during the 1978-1982 period. The second was established during 1983-1987 and the last one, 1988-1992, was not implemented at all, due to the political crisis of the period.

expended with the implementation of the National Cultural Network of Cities programme in November 1993 (Synodinos, 1994: 43-47).

Culture became a strategic area for economic development and especially for regional development (Skia-Panopoulou, 2008: 89).¹⁰ Regional cultural development was related to an attempt to decentralise administrative and decision-making operations from central government and to disseminate and diffuse Greek culture. The issues of cultural accessibility for a wider population were conceived as a means of cultural democratisation which could overcome economic, social or geographic divisions (Skia-Panopoulou, 2008: 90).

In the 1990s, cultural policy and planning was included in EU community support frameworks, and hence EU cultural frameworks gradually became extremely relevant to local and national cultural projects. Community Support Frameworks (CSF) were part of the EU Cohesion Policy, a set of activities aimed at the reduction of regional and social disparities in the EU (Hooghe, 1996: 34). These funds co-ordinated multi-annual programmes designed to promote economic development in the poorer areas of the EU.¹¹ During the programme period 1994 to 1999, emphasis was placed on major infrastructure projects of a national character and on connecting Greece to other countries, unlike the developmental strategy applied in Greece from 1984 to 1993 (1st CSF) which was characterised

¹⁰ The foundation of several Municipal Cultural Enterprises and the Municipal Regional Theatres were initiatives of the 1983-1987 Programme for Cultural Development, as part of the Five Year Programme for Economic and Social Development.

¹¹ The 2nd Community Programme applied to countries with a Gross National Product of less than 90 % of the Community average on the condition that they had a programme leading to economic convergence fulfilling the criteria of the economic and monetary union as set out in the EC Treaty (Goulet, 2008 [online]: 14).

by a large dispersal of the available funds to small infrastructure projects all over the country.

EU funding programmes supported cultural projects which would be difficult to be supported by the restricted budget of the Ministry of Culture, such as the National Cultural Network of Cities (Mikroutsikos in Houzouri, 1995: 13–16). A prerequisite was, however, to support indigenous economic development by involving actors with knowledge of the particular local problems, and hence the network was based on the collaboration of municipalities and local institutions.¹²

The Treaty of Maastricht (1992), in addition, consolidated the notion of ‘Europe without frontiers’ and fostered the idea of an open market of people, goods and services and aimed at the creation of a sense of European identity that could incorporate and accommodate cultural diversity. In this context, collaborations and exchanges among countries and artists were promoted and financially supported by EU programmes, and a series of symbols were created, from a flag, to the European Capital of Culture¹³ and the European Orchestras. In 1995, Greek cultural policy faced this challenge with several efforts to support artistic excellence in different art forms in order to promote Greece and its arts to the European scene afterwards (Mikroutsikos in Houzouri, 1995: 13–16).

¹² An evaluation, however, of the network stressed difficulties at regional and central levels (lack of administrative co-ordination, difficulty of autonomy of cultural organisations at a local level, delay in creating the necessary infrastructure) (Gouli, 1996: 19-20).

¹³ The project was initiated in 1985, based on an idea of Melina Merkouri and Jack Lang. Athens was the first European Capital of Culture, symbolically emphasising Athens as the birthplace of European culture, but also stressing Greece’s outward orientation after a long period of introversion.

The year 1995, the focus of this thesis, was in economic terms part of the 2nd Community Support Framework (1994–1999) in which culture and tourism were interconnected (Skia-Panopoulou, 2008: 91).¹⁴ The strategic aim of the programme for Greece was the improvement and competitiveness of tourism based on its connection to culture (cultural tourism). The two axes of the programme were, firstly, the preservation, improvement and development of cultural heritage, and, secondly, the development of contemporary Greek culture, mainly through the creation of cultural infrastructure and major institutions (Konsola, 2006: 182–183). During the same period, the Ministry of Culture appointed a series of Committees of Experts for designing national policies in several cultural fields (literature, theatre, music and dance). However, dance policy in terms of aims, objectives and planning of actions has still not been fully implemented today.

Despite the decentralisation efforts in the 1980s, the political and administrative system of the country remained centralised in Athens (Charalambidis, Maratou-Alipranti & Hadjiyanni, eds., 2004 [online]: 90; Synodinos, 1994: 43-47; see also Chapter 4 for an exploration of implications for dance artists). The state and its departments, depending on the philosophy of the government, continued to be responsible for the majority of political actions and retained control in comparison to local, regional or other structures. In addition, several tensions exist within the state, and due to the lack of a system of evaluation and feedback (Zorba, 1997: 36), general political principles of the government were transformed into

¹⁴ The actions of the five-year plan were the unification of archeological sites of Athens, the New Museum of Acropolis, the restoration of other museums and archeological sites, the creation of a cultural centre in Thessaloniki, the completion of the Athens Music Hall and the creation of the National Cultural Network of Cities. Greece would receive 4.2 billion drachmas in total during those five years, and the Ministry of Culture would contribute 160 million.

ministerial decisions according to the interpretation and attitudes of the Minister. As a consequence, unstable political situations, like during the 1989–1991 period, and continuous changes in the Ministry of Culture in the period 1989–1996¹⁵ jeopardised any continuity of cultural policy.

3.3.2. Dance policy and contemporary dance

Within cultural policy there was neither special concern for dance and dance policy, nor clarity about dance's specific problems or needs. Dance was included in contemporary culture and was (and still is)¹⁶ related to theatre, though in terms of status and financial support, it remained in a subordinate position. Until the mid-1990s, for example, theatre subsidies were allocated according to advice from an Advisory Committee of Experts approved by the Minister of Culture, while dance subsidies were allocated in light of suggestions from the appropriate Bureau of the Ministry also approved by the Minister (Ministry of Culture and Science, 1985: 90). This practice was regarded as indicating the low status of dance within culture and it was criticised by the dance world. The main argument was the discrepancy of criteria for selection and the deficiencies of the Ministry's officials to articulate valid artistic judgments (anon, 1992: 1).

After the death of Melina Merkouri in 1993, Thanos Mikroutsikos, a well-known composer, was appointed Minister of Culture by the Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou in 1994. Mikroutsikos' appointment was mainly based on the belief

¹⁵ As an example, during the 1989–1996 period, there were appointed eight different Ministers of Culture.

¹⁶ For example, in the Ministry's annual budget, funding for independent dance and theatre companies was and still is included in a common account.

that as an artist he could better understand and deal with cultural matters.¹⁷ The rationale of Mikroutsikos's policy was based on the general cultural frameworks decided by the Government (such as the financial support from the 2nd Community Support Framework , see pp. 127 - 129) and his personal decisions, as Mikroutsikos had full political and economic support from Prime Minister Papandreou (Mikroutsikos, 2010 [non-print]).

For Mikroutsikos:

National policy for culture means the creation of a general rationale for this domain. [It means] the syntax of a philosophy and a set of principles. Consequently, actions can be taken without the fear of being short-term or fragmented. By the term national policy I mean a general, contemporary, non-fragmentary policy, with hierarchies which will have effects on a national scale.

Mikroutsikos in Varopoulou, 1994, 28

Commenting on the means and limits of state intervention in culture, Mikroutsikos delineates the parameters of the state's action in relation to the need to counterbalance infrastructural deficits: "[The State will interfere] as much as it is necessary to confront the lack of structure and cultural institutions" (Mikroutsikos in Varopoulou, 1994: 29). Inherent in these arguments is a political decision to take action in the arts and to support the arts' development against the pressure of instability, fragmentation, market and clientist pressures.

On Mikroutsikos' decision, the overall budget for funding independent dance was raised significantly in 1994, and in 1995 funding policy changed to a different model. In particular, the budget for dance in 1993 was 67 million drachmas, in

¹⁷ Melina Merkouri, the previous Minister of Culture, was also an internationally renowned actress.

1994 it was raised to 95 million and in 1995 to 206 million (see Appendix 3). In 1995, the increased budget was distributed to fewer companies and, in addition, a three-year funding plan was initiated for selected companies. Edafos Company and Oktana Dancetheatre were among the companies selected for a three-year subsidy agreement and SineQuaNon received funding for the first time as one of the top-rated companies among a number of one-year subsidy projects (see Appendices 2 and 3).

These three-year funding projects were allocated on an ad hoc basis by the Minister, and afterwards he appointed a Board of Advisors to examine the applications for one-year funding. The Advisory Board was also responsible for selecting the recipient of the State Dance Award,¹⁸ which was first awarded in 1994, by Mikroutsikos, to the production *Midia* [*Medea*] by Edafos Company. Mikroutsikos's exercise of power was criticised for being authoritarian while others stressed the political courage of his cultural initiatives (Rikakis, 1995a: 304). Mikroutsikos' radical cultural policy made an important effort to raise the profile of dance; however, its implications were not fully developed due to his replacement in 1996 and the completely different cultural philosophy of his successor.

The rationale for these changes in dance funding was expressed in a press release by the Ministry to the media, signed by the Minister (Minister of Culture, 1995). In this press release, dance was connected to its ancient origins and thus it was

¹⁸ Members of the first Advisory Dance Panel of the Ministry of Culture were: Andreas Rikakis (dance critic, Advisor to the Minister of Culture), Yannis Metsis (dance teacher, choreographer), Paylina Veremi (dance teacher), Eleftheria Kouroupi (choreographer), Clementine Vounelaki (dance journalist).

validated as being important alongside the other arts. A critique was also expressed in the text for the, by then, awkward relationship between the Ministry and dance, which was based on undefined rationales and fragmented actions. Further on, the Minister pointed to the decision for a radical shift towards a methodologically planned intervention in dance. This intervention included an increase of overall budget for independent dance companies and the initiation of a three-year subsidy scheme for selected companies, along with one-year project funds.

The new funding scheme proposed by Mikroutsikos aimed at a sustained scheme to support dance production, or the “institutionalization of dance funding” as the document describes it (Ministry of Culture, 1995). This scheme was aimed at creating stable and secure conditions for artistic creation. The selection of the companies was made by the Minister on the criteria of the quality of the companies’ works in general, their current and future artistic plans, and their overall contribution to dance (Ministry of Culture, 1995). The companies were obliged to produce one work per year or three works in total during the three-year plan, and thus, an institutionalization of dance production was introduced.

Dance scholarship has shown how important it is to discern what has been institutionalised in each case, for this indicates power relations and their possible shifts (Huxley, 1999: 123–130). In the case of this research, the initiatives by the Ministry of Culture forced dance policy towards dance production instead of experimentation (such was the case of the Choreographic Competition ‘Rallou Manou’, see pp. 143-144) and professionalism instead of amateur activities.

Choreography thus became a cultural product characterised by a division of cultural labour which clearly distinguished the roles of choreographer, performers, critics and audiences. The problem with these shifts was not their rationale per se, but the fact that gradually the State and its philosophy started to monopolise the available resources, forcing other institutions to stop operating and, by consequence, pushing artists to produce works under a single model.

The initiatives by the Ministry of Culture towards a dance policy, also included the formation of a working group for planning the creation of a National Ballet Company; the foundation of the Kalamata International Dance Centre and Dance Festival as part of the National Network of Cities; the increase of funding for the State School of Dance; the financial support for venues presenting dance performances (Knossos and Ergostasio); and the appointment of a working group for designing a National Dance Policy. The two planning initiatives, the National Ballet Company and the National Dance Policy, were never actualised, due to changes in cultural priorities. The baseline of these initiatives was the creation of institutions for dance and the design of a structure which could support dance in its several needs: education, performance, distribution, promotion.

The new funding system left many dance companies without funding, and it was criticised by part of the dance world because of its hierarchical structure and strongly selective character. Dance critic Andreas Rikakis, in an overview of the year 1995, wrote:

The 1995-1996 season has been recorded in the history of theatrical Greek dance as the period when the art of Terpsichore has received, for the first time, the biggest possible support from the state –

ethically, economically and culturally – while at the same time [it received] a major...attack from the majority of the dance world.

Rikakis, 1996: 302

After the death of Andreas Papandreou in June 1996, Evangelos Venizelos, a prominent professor of Law, became the Minister of Culture of the socialist government on September 26th, 1996. He changed the funding policy that had been initiated in previous years, a decision which was negatively received in relation to dance (Vounelaki, 1998; Tsantaki, 1997 [online]). Venizelos' policy re-evaluated cultural priorities and was in accordance with shifts in the overall governmental priorities of economic reform and European integration.

In these processes, culture would play the role of national ambassador to Europe and it would contribute to national prestige. Archaeological sites and cultural heritage as evidence of a national identity, and the Olympic Games and Cultural Olympiad as vehicles for a local-global exchange and a realm for national symbolism, became the priorities of the cultural policy for the country. Contemporary production, including dance, became less valued in such an enterprise. Venizelos stated: "What creates the strongest impression and is the great advantage of our country, in terms of development and ideological symbolism, is cultural heritage" (Venizelos, 1997: 31). According to Venizelos, "the responsibility of the state is, primarily, the protection of the cultural heritage" and he criticised previous political decisions, pointing out that "the role of the Ministry of Culture is not the role of a Ministry for the Arts" (Loverdou, 1998 [online]: z6-z7).

These differences over the role of the Ministry of Culture represented shifting rationales concerning culture, and were related to overall political and economic conditions. The new economic and political conditions of the late 1990s left contemporary creation and dance in a contested position between desires for greater autonomy from state intervention and greater integration with laissez-faire market philosophies.

Another factor contributing to the financial context for the arts during the early 1990s was corporate sponsorship. In the period from 1991 to 1997, corporate sponsorship for the arts and culture in general nearly tripled. The money allocated for the arts increased from 2 million drachmas in 1991 to 6.5 million in 1997. In particular, the distribution of sponsorship funds in 1994 were: heritage 26%, music 34%, visual arts 10%, theatre 4%, cinema 2% and dance 0.5%. In 1995 the allocation changed to: heritage 36.5%, music 28%, visual arts 12%, theatre 4%, cinema 1% and dance 0.5% (Zounis, 1999, 46).

The overall support for dance has not changed in the hierarchical structure of corporate funds; however, the increase in the total amount allocated has affected dance's support. Among the sponsors for dance that are relevant to our study were the Ioannis F. Kostopoulos Foundation and Marinopoulos Corporation, who both supported Edafos Company and Oktana Dance Theatre. In addition, the Athens Concert Hall had major support from sponsorship, and, hence, the inclusion of dance in its programming reveals an indirect link between dance and sponsors.

Sponsorship was promoted by the Association for the Support of Cultural Activities (OMEPO), which enlisted principal companies engaged in arts sponsorship. This association was founded in 1986 and until 1995 included 61 companies (Halaris and Plios, 1996: 166). Furthermore, the authors indicate the preference of the sponsors for conservative art forms rather than experimental work, and an orientation toward middle-class tastes, the Athens Concert Hall being a major example (Halaris and Plios, 1996: 173-174, see also below pp. 145-146).

Halaris and Pilos (1996) indicate that arts sponsorship offers a strategy for promoting an ethical corporate image. This kind of communicative strategy is ethical because it exceeds the promotion of a product to the market, and instead involves the promotion of a whole set of values and ways of living. Support for the arts, then, is not only promotion and advertisement but a powerful communicational means which “does not refer to consumer attributes of the commodity but to sociocultural values of the enterprise” (Halaris and Plios, 1996: 175). Furthermore, it endows corporate images with artistic and aesthetic values promoting the companies’ prestige and shifting the significance of art from the artwork itself to its function as a social event. As a consequence, publicity officers, press professionals and public relation managers acquire a leading role in cultural production, consumption and dissemination (Halaris & Plios, 1996: 176–177).

The autonomy of art, as a means of production which escapes or resists economic imperatives, was under pressure, due to the intensification of economic

parameters in production (sponsorship, state funding), the emergence of arts intermediates (public relations, media, sponsorship consultants) and the increased opportunities for public performance, which differentiate between prestigious and non-prestigious, large-scale and small-scale, mainstream and alternative sectors of culture.

A range of institutions, public and private, on local, national and international levels, co-existed and operated within this cultural system. Their interdependence and interrelationship were based on a variety of strategies, convergences, divergences and, sometimes, conflicts, and within this environment the three companies expanded their horizons.

3.4. Mapping the dance institutions and resources in the 1990s

In the early 1990s, the dance field in Greece was “a landscape of discontinuity, so characteristic of the history of dance in Greece” (Vounelaki, 1996a: 57). However, the field started to expand, become enriched and gain momentum, and it was argued that “during the last decade we are witnessing an awaking of dance as theatre art, which is without historical precedent in the country” (Vounelaki, 1996a [online]: 47).

A need for openness to the world, communication and information among the artists was very vividly expressed in the early 1990s. For example, choreographer Apostolia Papadamaki posited:

Today, my dance generation tries to overcome the obstacle of being in Greece. To overcome the problem of being isolated from Europe and

the USA...I hope that next generations will not have the problems we are facing. I hope information and communication will be easy for them.

Papadamaki in Hatzopoulos, 1998 [non-print]

Within this rationale, actions were taken by individual artists (inviting foreign artists to perform or teach) and public bodies in a range of artistic forms. For example, in 1992, the National Gallery in Athens organised the biggest international exhibition on European art, under the title “From El Greco to Cezanne”, which attracted hundreds of thousands of visitors¹⁹ and became the most successful exhibition in the history of the National Gallery (National Gallery, no date [online]).

In dance, a greater number of young artists had the opportunity to travel and study abroad, with the help of scholarships and grants, and to share new knowledge and techniques. Seminars and workshops were organised in Athens, Tinos and Thessaloniki by choreographers and artists but also by organisations such as the Somateio Chorou kai Rhythmikis [Association of Dance and Rhythm]. As a consequence, communication and familiarisation with choreographic and artistic practices of the international scene started to revitalise Greek artists.

The number of contemporary companies started to increase, as the graduates of dance schools were also increasing. Many companies founded between 1985 and 1995 were short-lived. This could be explained by the limited financial support and the increased competition within the dance field, but it might also indicate their initiators’ superficial engagement with dance creation. Many of the artists

¹⁹ The National Gallery estimates that the number of visitors was around 600,000 people (National Gallery, no date [online]).

nurtured in this proliferation of dance activities since the 1980s had to confront the difficulty of including themselves in the country's existing dance paradigms.

The generation of Pratsika and Manou had proposed dance as a conveyor of folk or ancient Greek narrative. Dancing bodies were vehicles of representations of an intellectual realm and the spectator based his/her communication with the dance on his/her literary and/or musical knowledge. Madafounis, Metsis and De Pian had promoted a technical standard which engaged the spectator through the aesthetics of spectacle. The young artists examined in this research proposed, instead, a personal exploration of body, movement and expression (see the introduction and Chapters 4 to 6).

Dance education in Greece was, and still is, orientated towards training dancers, teachers and choreographers, and undergraduate or postgraduate degrees in dance theory, history or criticism in an academic context still do not exist today (Savrami, 2012 [online], 1–8). Educational, economic and political legislation within the European Community, as part of the policy for 'Europe without Frontiers', led several international educational institutions to open branches in Greece in the 1990s. A number of private colleges were founded, which included dance degrees, among them Southeastern CSE Global College and Laban Centre.

The Department of Performing Arts within Southeastern College was founded in 1991 by the choreographer Maria Tsouvala. Its curriculum included practical and theoretical subjects and it was influenced by American postmodern dance. Dora Tsatsou and the Moraitis School, in collaboration with Laban Centre for

Movement and Dance in London, founded The School of Art of Dancing in 1990. This was the first complete educational course based on Laban theories ever taught in Greece. As a result, the opportunities for dance studies were increased in the early 1990s, offering a diverse range of dance philosophies and practices.

The proliferation of dance educational institutions indicates the increased number of people interested in being involved in dance. In regard to professional dance education, in the academic year 1993–94, 226 students were attending classes in 11 schools in Athens. In 1994–95, the number of schools increased to 15 and the students to 433; and in 1995–96, 451 students were studying in 10 schools (Karagianni, 2005: 133).

In 1990, Denny Efthymiou-Tsekoura became Director of the State School of Dance and she started to renew the educational curriculum of the school by abandoning subjects which seem outdated, such as piano, flute, foreign languages and historical dances, while at the same time introducing new body techniques such as tai-chi and body mind centering, and organising seminars with invited international teachers (Alkalay, 2002: 57–58).

In terms of dance presentation, alongside the Athens Festival (see p. 88), the International Festival of Dance & Expression, a smaller dance festival organized in Chania, Crete, became the home of the first exclusively dance festival. Initiated in 1990, it was organised by the Municipality of Chania and the choreographer and dance teacher Efi Kaloutsi. The International Festival of Dance & Expression was organised yearly until 1998, and it presented Greek contemporary dance

companies and invited international artists, among whom were Jerome Andrews, Masaki Iwana, Yolande Snaith and Tanzfabrik Berlin.

In the spring of 1995, the initiation of Kalamata International Dance Festival funded by the Ministry of Culture was an important action for dance's decentralisation. The festival's profile was open to a diverse range of dance styles and its programming included Greek and international companies. At the same time, seminars, workshops, lectures and parallel events also took place.

Contemporary dance also started to be included in official cultural presentations of Greece abroad. Such an occasion was the commission and presentation of *Midia [Medea]* by Edafos Company for Antwerp Cultural Capital of Europe in 1993 (see p. 249), which gave dance a role within foreign policy initiatives and cultural promotion abroad. In addition, other European initiatives, such as the Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean,²⁰ also contributed to the support and promotion of young artists abroad, at a time when national, local or independent structures for promoting dance abroad were in their infancy. A crucial role in fostering dance's visibility at that time was played by the media, especially newspapers and dance magazines which started to cover dance performances regularly (see pp. 35 - 36).

A major problem for dance was the absence of a permanent dance theatre and the limited dance studios for rehearsals. In the first decades of the 1990s, there were

²⁰ Oktana Dance Theatre performed *Oi Gamoi [Les Noces]* in Lisbon during the Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean (1994), and Edafos Company presented *To Vouno. Adiavroxo [The mountain. Raincoat]* in Barcelona (1987) and *Domatio I & Domatio II [Room I & Room II]* in Bologna (1988).

two theatres which presented dance performances: Knossos and Ergostasio, private venues, both financially supported by the Ministry of Culture. Knossos was a theatre with regular performances that presented dance for a small period of time during the season. Ergostasio was an old factory which was transformed into a small venue that exclusively presented dance performances.

The Municipal Theatre of Athens, built in 1989 by the Municipality of Athens, was the only venue designed especially for dance performance. It was situated inside a building which also included dance studios for rehearsals. Each year, the Municipality of Athens organised the ‘Month of Dance-Dromena’, a platform for presenting dance with free admission (1989–1995). It also organised the Choreographic Competition ‘Rallou Manou’ (1989–1995), which supported young artists and dance experimentation that otherwise would struggle to reach the public (Rikakis, 1989: 18).

According to the President of the Jury, Dora Tsatsou, this dance competition aimed at “creating the conditions and giving the motivation to young artists to experiment. This is the only way to find new talent” (in Vounelaki, 1989c: 18–19). Such initiation emphasised the need to promote contemporary dance with an experimental identity, implying that dance was at a dead end and renewal was needed. The competition nurtured a generation of young choreographers and it supported choreographers such as Konstantinos Rigos, Konstantinos Mihos and Anna-Sophia Kallinikidou (see chapters 4 and 5).

‘Dromena’, an initiative of the Municipality of Athens, acted as an open platform for young artists to present their work, regardless of their official dance status (graduates or students of dance schools, professional companies or informal groups). In addition, it supported the dissemination of dance and aimed at the introduction of a wider audience to dance performances through its policy of free attendance.

Gradually dance started to be presented during the whole year in several venues around Athens, multiplying the conditions under which dance could be performed, seen and be reached by a wider audience. Each of these venues and festivals had its own policy of presenting and supporting dance, and had contributed to the symbolic value and status of dance. A number of actors or directors have created a series of experimental venues, giving life to poor areas in the heart of the city. It was believed that these venues could not only change the urban topography but the whole dynamic of the city, creating, at the same time, alternative places for artistic experiments and a space for nurturing young artists and audiences.

These new theatre spaces started to present dance, a relationship based on the personal contact among the artists, the theatre owner/director and the choreographer. The selection of the theatre for presenting dance was determined by the profile of the venue, its capacity and economic factors (fees, type of contract). The fact that the technical requirements (sprung floor, proximity to the audience, type of stage) were not especially designed for dance exposed the limitations of the type of dance presented. In addition, dance companies started to create their own studios, transform venues for presenting dance (see p.209-210

and p.251) and organise workshops with international artists trying to create communication channels between Greece and the international dance community (see Chapter 4 for SineQuaNon's initiatives). These practices and actions revitalised dance; however, some of them were short-lived and proved to be insufficient resources for a greater number of artists.

The Athens Music Hall, known as The Megaron [The Mansion], was an ambitious project started in 1954 by the opera singer Alexandra Triandy. With State and private financial support, it was finally completed and opened in March 1991. It aimed at presenting an artistic programme comparable to concert halls worldwide and a range of artistic and educational activities. The Organization of Athens Music Hall was a private enterprise under the directorship of Christos Lambrakis, owner of a media corporation that included the newspapers To Vima and Ta Nea, and the television channel MEGA. The expectations for the new organisation and its contribution to the regeneration of the city's cultural life were extremely high. Symbolically, the opening of the organisation was set on 25th March 1991, relating the festivities for the new organisation with the National Day Celebration (Aggelikopoulos, 1990: B2–B3).

The Athens Music Hall became a prestigious cultural organisation, presenting mostly music but also other arts, and its cultural influence became dominant within the 1990s. It was also a major centre of power along with the Ministry of Culture.²¹ In 1993 it started to present dance by invited international companies,

²¹ The power of the Athens Music Hall and its efforts to control cultural production and promotion, with the help of the affiliated network of media, was strongly criticised by Rizospastis, the newspaper of the Greek Communist Party KKE (Ellinoudi, 1995).

and in 1995 it also began commissioning works by Greek choreographers.²² Dance critic Natasha Hassiotis suggested that: “The size [of the building], its fame, the high prices of the tickets, as well as a different, more efficient management...and the efficient administration resulted in the creation of a kind of ‘myth’ around the Organization’s name” (Hassiotis, 2001). As a result, Greek contemporary dance and, in particular, the choreographers who presented their work at the Athens Music Hall gained prestige and important resources for their work.

At the same time, pressures increased in terms of production and creating a certain aesthetic: “the organization and its audience have set a way of seeing and evaluating the arts, in accordance with the needs and the tolerance of a particular audience – often characterised as conservative” (Hassiotis, 2001). Companies were expected to perform in large-scale venues and to follow a set of aesthetic prerequisites (ancient theme, relation to music) which prescribed a conventional paradigm. There was a tension, then, between the support and provision of resources for dance and the imposition of a set of conditions which jeopardised dance’s experiments.

It is important to note that in some respects state support was very positive for it enabled contemporary dance to be produced and presented within a framework of professionalism, artistic development and future planning; as a consequence, a

²² The first companies commissioned by Athens Music Hall were Analia, Mikro Choreftiko Theatro, Edafos Company and Oktana Dancetheatre. As its rationale was music oriented, the collaboration between music and dance was the prime aim of such commissions. By the same token, the commissions to the four companies in 1995 were based on the premise to create a work on an ancient theme with a specially commissioned musical score by a Greek composer, selected by the choreographer.

growing audience for dance was created and Greek contemporary dance started to be presented in international festivals and platforms. On the other hand, objections were raised concerning the hierarchical structure which the funding system created, about dance's accessibility becoming synonymous with its commodification and market orientation, and relating to the pressures for a (national) cultural representation abroad.

3.5. Conclusion

The first half of the 1990s seemed to encompass the accumulation of previous processes. In all fields (political, economic, artistic and social) there are signs of conflicts, tensions, changes and transitions. In the 1990s, the euphoria of stable political conditions in the country was over and redistribution of social power and resources changed the context within which dance could be experienced, seen and appreciated. The chapter has argued that the concepts of modernisation and transformation of the country are pertinent to the foundation of the modern Greek state in the 19th century, and that these concepts assumed different meanings over time. In the 1990s, European orientation was a major issue, European cultural funds supported initiatives in the country, and the modernisation processes included the intensification of consumer culture pressures. Amidst all these forces, dance and the body stands as a site for both emancipation and control.

Cultural policy was caught between ideals of a national and a European identity. The economy of culture, including sponsorship, commissions and media support, inflected the production and reception of the works, intensifying the hierarchy

emerging within the dance field. Dance became an art that was supported by state funds and its visibility and prestige were promoted; however, tensions between dance experimentation and dance accessibility started to become apparent.

These tensions provided the context for the works examined in the following chapters. Each of the companies, according to its background, stage of artistic development and artistic aims negotiated the tensions and built a specific artistic identity. SineQuaNon, the newest in the dance field, promoted an experimental image, performed in non-commercial venues and were supported by the available in the field resources. Oktana Dancetheatre and Edafos Company took initiatives and expanded existing conditions of production. Furthermore, they built a strategy for audience development based on negotiations of dance history and art history respectively.

CHAPTER 4 EXPLORING PHYSICALITY, CONSTRUCTING COMMUNITY: *PROSOLOTOIXOS [TOUR DE FORCE]*¹ BY SINEQUANON

4.1. Introduction

SineQuaNon is a dance collective instrumental in extending the influence of American postmodern dance in Greece, and one of the companies that introduced release techniques to the country. In its work, theatrical narrative was replaced by an experience of bodily states, which gave rise to different conceptions of movement, expression and collaboration. SineQuaNon's artistic practices (improvisation in the studio, educational initiatives and collaborative projects) proposed a sense of powerful communal subjectivities, on and off stage, an artistic and social practice rare in the age of individualism.

Reviews and articles emphasised the innovation of SineQuaNon's work (Vounelaki, 2002: 11–13; Vounelaki, 1996b: 53; Ginot, 1997: 19; Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004: 364–369) and in so doing, they placed the company within a generation of artists who questioned or subverted existing Greek dance practices and aesthetics. However, these commentators did not analyse the way in which these innovations might offer a model for negotiating the country's changing conditions and the cultural and political significance of such models. In other words, they acknowledged the artistic and formal developments, but they could not, or did not want to, examine the socio-political meanings and potentials of such models, which is the focus here.

¹ *Tour de Force* is the English translation of *ProsOlotiouxos* used in the company's promotional material. The title was first used for the company's participation at the Rencontres Chorégraphiques Internationales de Seine-Saint-Denis/Bagnolet (France) in 1996.

This chapter examines *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] (1995) choreographed by Apostolia Papadamaki, a member of SineQuaNon, focusing particularly on the use of speed as reflecting or embodying in various ways the conditions of modernisation of the country, fostering the idea of community and the hope for change. The chapter argues that speed and momentum are states that the bodies on stage can experience and share with the audience, and through this shared experience, a sense of community is reinforced. In addition, this sharing also proposes an expression of an (imaginative) forward motion, a symbolic leap out of the past. By implication, the movement aesthetics of the work are characterised by a strong and energetic torso with limbs acting as generators of force. At the same time, a sense of sharing and confidence is built among the dancing bodies as they catch, support and hold each other. In socio-political terms, *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] suggests a vision of the future in terms of communal sharing, understanding and co-existence.

The link between speed (of movement) and processes of modernisation is pertinent in the history of modernity, as exemplified in the technological innovations of the 20th century, such as trains and cars or digital technology and the internet. For some authors, movement is, indeed, “the only changeless element in Modernity...its permanent emblem” (Ferguson cited in Lepecki, 2006: 7), or even more, the very ontology of modernity “is pure being-toward-movement” (Sloterdijk cited in Lepecki, 2006: 7). In particular for dance, André Lepecki theorizes the isomorphism of dance and movement within the condition of modernity, and proposes a critique of this isomorphism (2006).

However, movement conceived as progress and change and expressed through dancing subjects might also have other socio-political nuances, which are the focus of this examination. The obsession of modernity with movement is symbolically expressed in the belief in progress, which is indicated as a movement forward, a call for departure, evident in the title of the work analysed in this chapter (see pp. 163 - 164). A general critique of dance as movement (like Lepecki's argument), ignores differences in dance's kinesthetic and ideological origins in different contexts. For that reason, SineQuaNon's case is particularly interesting in the Greek context, as a company whose origins are rooted in Greek dance culture combined with American influences, which, in turn, suggests a range of ideological underpinnings of this movement's identity in the context of Greece.

SineQuaNon's collaborative model and improvisational strategies helped build a sense of community within the company (Panagiotara, 2006). Dance critic Isabelle Ginot stressed that SineQuaNon's way of practice and thinking as "exchange, invention of new modes of presentation and working with improvisation" was a result and a "will to profit by the fact that in their country dance is in its infancy" (Ginot, 1997: 19). Ginot's review, then, makes a link between the company's artistic practice and the nature of the wider dance field, suggesting that the problems dance artists had to face could motivate and generate alternative models for producing dance works and artistic collaborations, as SineQuaNon indicated from their early stages. SineQuaNon then, propose possibilities for envisioning this community as opening beyond the company, as argued in this chapter. Finally, SineQuaNon was among the companies using

small non-commercial venues, which also played a role in the construction of communities.

The notion of community as a social formation in the late- 20th- century Western societies cannot be simply based either on local boundaries or on social class divisions, but often, it is a matter of choice for the people involved. The reason for identifying oneself as a member of a community is the emotional satisfaction derived from a common aim or experience (Urry, 1995: 220–221), which is what SineQuaNon proposed in their choreography and their artistic practice in general (venues of presentation, open classes and artistic exchanges).

Since the 1980s, social scientists in Greece have noticed a similar trend in community formations which they named ‘exatomikevmeni koinonikotita’ [individualist sociality] (Vamvakas & Panagiotopoulos, 2010: LXVII). The notion referred to the creation of a community between people who shared common interests, like music or cinema, and appeared in public spaces such as cinemas, bars or cafes. Such practices, according to social scientists, cultivated a range of different cultural tastes other than the mainstream taste of the middle class, and hence, those practices highlighted cultural distinction (Vamvakas, & Panagiotopoulos 2010: LXVII). At the same time, however, this sociality suggested an alternative to individualism as a social ideal, promoted by the ramifications of, the economically motivated aspects of modernisation.

Contemporary dance, as an art related historically to the upper class (see pp. 79 - 80), had built an elitist identity, which was expressed in its (relatively) small

audience. In the 1990s, a number of non-commercial or alternative festivals and venues for theatre and dance attracted spectators willing to take artistic risks, who participated, regularly, in a wide range of theatrical events or festivals (Mavromoustakos, 2005: 187). Such audiences, by consequence, became a discrete community of people attending dance and theatre at venues that functioned similarly to other public spaces of ‘individualist sociality’.

This network of experimental, small venues, audience and artists was different not only from the commercial field but also from the elitist spectacles of the Athens Music Hall (see pp. 145-146).² Ergostasio [Factory], (see p.142 and p. 158-159), Apotheke (see pp. 209-212) and Katalypsi [Occupation] (see p. 243-244, footnote 12), all venues used by the companies examined in the thesis, were part of such network. Dance spectatorship then, became a mechanism for sustaining the cultivation of a community of people who shared common dance experiences and taste, and within this framework, *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] was presented.

4.2. SineQuaNon: entering the dance field

SineQuaNon was founded in 1992 by Apostolia Papadamaki, Anna-Sophia Kallinikidou, Dimitri Sotiriou, Kiki Baka, Kalliopi Sfika and Lena Golemati, some of them recent graduates of the State School of Dance in Athens, while others were still students. Their collaboration and friendship began during their studies, and the philosophy, educational curriculum and aims of the State School of Dance set the framework within which their first choreographic attempts took

² The elitist character of Athens Music Hall’s productions was evident in the prices of the tickets and the limited number of tickets for sale, due to priority given to subscribers and the general promotional strategy of the organisation .

shape (Papadamaki, 2007 [non-print]; Sotiriou & Baka, 2007 [non-print]). Nearly all of the dancers were born outside Athens³ and moved to the capital to study dance at a professional level, while some, such as Papadamaki and Sotiriou, had already acquired an academic degree in other fields,⁴ and entered dance in their twenties.

Their common interests in movement and their personal experiences as ‘foreigners’ in the city of Athens were decisive factors, which fostered the personal ties between them, supported their emotional, personal and everyday needs, and fuelled their artistic explorations through the sense of belonging to a group (Sotiriou & Baka, 2007 [non-print]; Kallinikidou, 2008 [non-print]). Greece is institutionally, culturally and economically Athens-centered (Charalambidis, Maratou-Alipranti, & Hadjiyanni, eds., 2004 [online]: 90) and consequently, the deficiencies of living in provincial areas of the country, in terms of equal opportunities and access to dance education, dance performances, and cultural events, forced SineQuaNon members to travel to Athens (Kallinikidou, 2008 [non-print]; Papadamaki, 2007 [non-print]). Papadamaki, referring to their experience of city life, stressed:

We were ‘thirsty’. [In Athens] we were going to the movies, to concerts, exhibitions, took classes with Greek dancers just coming back from New York, even with Steve Paxton⁵ when he came to

³ Apostolia Papadamaki was born in Thessaloniki, Dimitris Sotiriou in Drama, Kiki Baka in Ioannina, Kalliopi Sfika in Thessaloniki, all cities of Northern Greece. Anna-Sophia Kallinikidou was born in Stockholm, Sweden, but grew up in Thessaloniki.

⁴ Apostolia Papadamaki is a Physical Education graduate and Dimitris Sotiriou holds a BA in Law.

⁵ Steve Paxton (b 1939) is a leading American choreographer and initiator of contact improvisation (1972), a system of improvised movement based on the laws of gravity and momentum. Paxton was one of the founding members of the Judson Dance Theatre (1962) and of the improvisational group Grand Union (1970). In Athens, Steve Paxton taught a workshop and performed *Goldberg Variations* at Theatre Kava in Athens on 24 May 1989. Judson Dance Theatre was a ground-breaking dance collective, which was based in New York and performed at Judson Church in the 1960s. Its radical choreographing explorations and rejection of theatricality are among its prominent elements which gave birth to the dance movement called American post-modern dance.

Athens, after an invitation by the choreographer/improviser Anastasia Lyra.

Papadamaki, 2007 [non-print]

The experience of city life and the available artistic opportunities in a metropolitan context, an issue relevant to artists' imagination and artistic production since the early 20th century (Williams, 1989a: 37– 48; Burt, 1998: 17), were further intensified for SineQuaNon members when they studied in New York from 1992 until 1994. Their studies provided a somatic knowledge that altered their body consciousness, movement aesthetic and artistic philosophy (see 4.5).

A number of then existing institutional structures, such as the Choreographic Competition 'Rallou Manou', and the dance platform 'Dromena' (see p. 143), provided the impetus for presenting and promoting SineQuaNon's early works. They also set the conditions for the official foundation of the company, and helped them acquire their first awards.⁶ These early works, which were short in duration, had a thematic content expressed through gestures, movement and poses in relation to a particular mood created by the music and the lighting. The company members' studies at the State School of Dance enriched their incorporated cultural capital (Anheier's concept, see p. 51-52), which legitimised their professional status, while competitions and awards valued the artistic merit

In Athens, Steve Paxton taught a workshop and performed *Goldberg Variations* at Theatre Kava in Athens on May, 24th 1989.

⁶ In May 1992, Kallinikidou's creation *Oneirevomoun na ziso yperoxa* [*I was dreaming of living wonderfully*] was awarded Special Price at the Choreographic Competition, 'Rallou Manou', and Kiki Baka received the Best Dancer Award in the same competition. In June 1992, Papadamaki's choreography *Eimetha toso ena* [*We are so one*] was awarded 2nd Prize at the Choreography Competition organised by the Ellinikos Organismos Tourismou [Hellenic Tourism Organisation] at the Pallas Theatre in Athens. The Prize was accompanied by an unexpectedly large amount of money for a new choreographer (around 1,000,000 drachmas).

of SineQuaNon's work by attributing symbolic cultural capital. This repository of capital was further intensified by scholarships⁷ SineQuaNon members gained, and their studies in New York.



Figure 1:

SineQuaNon *Eimetha toso ena* [*We are so one*] by Apostolia Papadamaki (1992)

Although opportunities for touring outside Athens were limited, SineQuaNon promoted their image as a company whose members were from Northern Greece (Sotiriou and Baka, 2007 [non-print]) and, as a result, were invited to perform in Thessaloniki.⁸ SineQuaNon bridged the distance between regional and national cultural aims.⁹ They were part of the local population of Thessaloniki, but also they belonged to the national dance scene; they were presenting dance performances to Athenian and non-Athenian audiences alike. The company thus

⁷ Kallinikidou and Baka were recipients of the Koula Pratsika Scholarship, and Papadamaki was supported by the Alexandros Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, the Goulandri Foundation and the Merce Cunningham Studio.

⁸ The company performed at the Municipal Theatre Kipou (Garden Theatre) during the Month of Dance, a summer initiative organised by the Municipality of Thessaloniki. SineQuaNon presented the choreographies they had performed during the Month of Dance in Athens. The programme of the festival included eight companies, six of them based in Thessaloniki. SineQuaNon was the only professional company working at a national level.

⁹ The vision of decentralisation of culture was part of the cultural policy at that time, expressed in the initiation of regional dance structures, such as the Kalamata International Dance Festival. However, decentralisation was not clearly stated as a criterion for dance funding.

enriched its performance experience and through participation in cultural events, it created an identity suggesting openness, inclusion and a pluralistic vision of the diffusion of cultural products.

In New York, even though they all enrolled in the Merce Cunningham Studio for practical reasons (because they could thereby acquire a visa),¹⁰ they soon started to attend classes led by, among others, Irene Hultman, Jeremy Nelson, Suzan Klein and Doug Varone. These well-known teachers introduced them to release techniques, Alexander, yoga, aikido and improvisation, enriching their movement knowledge and sensibility. In New York, they “lived together and dreamed together” (Kallinikidou cited in Pyrgioti, 1996: 65), something they continued to do upon their return to Greece in 1995.

The global leaps from Northern Greece to Athens, and then to metropolitan New York and back, helped them to create an image of the company as open, fluid, and “cosmopolitan in character” (Pyrgioti, 1995: 65). Hence, a spatial/geographical journey became a map of symbolic cultural references, which started to distinguish SineQuaNon from other artists in the dance field. New York especially, as the centre of postmodern dance, was the emblem of an avant-garde movement which had not influenced Greece during the 1970s, due to Greece’s political conditions. As American postmodern dance was largely unknown to Greek artists and audiences (see p. 179, footnote 21), it had acquired a legendary aura for some Greek dance artists.

¹⁰ Immigration policy is a crucial issue for artistic mobility and exchange. EU treaties and regulations supported the mobility and circulation within the EU countries, but difficulties remained for the USA visa.

After 1995, when the company returned from the USA, many changes occurred in its composition. Kalliopi Sfika withdrew from the company immediately after their return; in 1997, Anna-Sofia Kallinikidou moved to the USA and new members joined. The roles within the company started gradually to become rigid and Papadamaki was presented as choreographer for the majority of the choreographies from 1997 to 2001, when she withdrew from the company. Today, SineQuaNon continues to exist but only two of its founding members are still on board, Sotiriou and Baka. The company continues its experimentation, relying “on its collectivity and cooperation between its members, collaborators and friends” (SineQuaNon, 2008 [online]). Papadamaki formed her own company, Quassistellar, and Kallinikidou has stopped dancing.

4.3. Stepping into the new: the first productions

Upon their return to Athens, the company began regular creation and presentation of new works (Sotiriou and Baka, 2007 [non-print]). In the autumn of 1994, the company was invited to create a series of short pieces for a collaborative performance called *The Bathtub*, which premiered on 19 October 1994 at Ergostasio (Factory). The production was commissioned by the choreographer, and one of the owners of the Ergostasio (Factory), Lia Meletopoulou¹¹ (Rikakis, 1995a: 309–310; Sotiriou & Baka, 2007 [non-print]).

¹¹ Lia Meletopoulou was the founder and choreographer of the company Mikro Choreftiko Theatro [Small Dancing Theatre] (1982). Meletopoulou studied dance in Greece and abroad with Rosalia Chladek, Harald Kreutzberg, Mary Wigman and, later, Louis Falco (N.Y). Mikro Choreftiko Theatro is a dance theatre company with a focus on female heroines and psychological interpretation of its characters.

Ergostasio was an old factory, transformed by the Meletopoulou family into two distinct and separate areas. The upper floor was a small venue for contemporary dance performances, and the lower floor hosted one of the most fashionable dance clubs of the early 1990s. The theatre was financially supported by the Ministry of Culture due to the limited number of venues available for dance performances fostering the presentation of new works, and this support allowed the venue to create an experimental profile by presenting new dance names and, exclusively, contemporary dance. A link to youth culture was indirectly evident in the spatial proximity to the club of the same name, not only in the urban design of both spaces, but also in the age of the audiences that both spaces attracted.

The Bathtub included choreographies by Antigone Gyra,¹² Kiki Baka, Anna-Sophia Kallinikidou and Apostolia Papadamaki. As the title indicates, the associative links to everydayness, not a common theme for dance in Greece at the time, allowed humorous, unconventional and fresh choreographic ideas to be presented (Hassiotis, 1995a: 28). The choreographies were short compositions, performed by the choreographers and invited artists.¹³ Such collaborations indicated an open and collaborative spirit extending beyond the company, which also suggested the existence of a larger dance community who shared similar

¹² Antigone Gyra is the founder and choreographer of Kiniteras Dancetheama (see p. 25, footnote 3).

¹³ In Baka's work, the performers included Maria Anthymidou and Michalis Nalbandis, founding members of dance company Choreftes [Dancers]. Maria Anthymidou is a graduate of the State School of Dance, and one of the first dancers who studied at the Merce Cunningham Studio in New York during the 1980s. In New York, she also attended Limon and release techniques classes, and danced with companies in New York, Caracas (Venezuela) and Athens. In 1993, together with Michalis Nalbandis and Aliki Kazouri, she co-founded dance company Choreftes [Dancers] in Athens. As a dance teacher, she is considered to be one of the most influential personalities of the generation of dancers that emerged in the early 1990s. Michalis Nalbandis is a graduate of Rallou Manou Dance School and a leading male dancer of the 1990s. He danced for numerous Greek contemporary dance companies, for the Ballet Company of the National Opera and for Rambert Dance Company (1989–1990), before co-founding dance company Choreftes [Dancers], of which he is the Artistic Director.

dance interests and supported each other. The three SineQuaNon choreographers brought to the performance a range of idiosyncratic languages, which became a point of reference for the company's identity based on its multiple choreographers.

For *The Bathtub* evening, SineQuaNon's members created choreographies around an object (the bathtub) and juxtaposed the bathtub, as prop and concept, to other elements of the performance: movement, music, and costumes. The exploration focused on the interplay of these elements and the ideas generated from such structure. The works suggested playfulness, humour, exuberance and physicality. For example, in Baka's choreography, a military march, usually heard in national celebrations, and reminding the audience of the military junta, is performed in a relaxed, soft-paced manner by dancers coming out of the bathtub. They wear blue shorts and white t-shirts, resembling the uniform students wear at national parades, although the military references are contradicted with a childish allure, emphasised by the shorts and the playfulness of the movement.

Dance critic Natasha Hassiotis, in her review in the specialised magazine Choros [Dance], referred to the differences between the choreographic approaches presented in *The Bathtub* and the conventional dance performances of that time:

We saw these fresh, cheerful, talented young ladies imagining innovative variations [on the theme of a bathtub] and they took us by surprise: risky music selections, unexpected [movement] combinations, cosmopolitan style and ... [a sense] that this new generation has made great leaps of improvement. It has assimilated influences from abroad and the country, without letting the shadow of the 'motherland' form a burden on the challenges of contemporary reality.

Hassiotis, 1995a: 28

Hassiotis argued that there was a generation of new dance artists who were overcoming dichotomies and tensions between local and international contexts and who did not confine themselves to a national(istic) ideal. She suggested that their artistic experimentations moved freely in time and space, and resisted any parochial artistic heritage (Hassiotis, 1995a, 28).

Theatre author Eleni Fessa-Emmanouel in her examination of Greek contemporary dance after the 1980s, also refers to a rejection of past practices. She relates these past practices to the hellenic-centered idealism of the Pratsika school (see pp. 64 - 73), to a conventional theatrical practice which examines contemporary art in relation to the country's ancient heritage, to a naturalistic depiction of the middle class which was dominant in theatre dramaturgy until the 1980s, and to a conservative attitude about the social function of theatre, which sees performance practice as a codified knowledge belonging to specialists and detached from other contexts (Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004: 59). Both Hassiotis and Fessa agree that changes occurred in the 1990s. It is, however, open to examination how different companies and dancers expressed these changes in different embodied forms.



Figure 2:

SineQuaNon ProsOlotoixos [Tour de Force], by Apostolia Papadamaki (1995)

*ProsOlotoixos [Tour de Force]*¹⁴ was premiered on 25 May 1995 at Ergostasio, as part of a double bill programme which also included *Gia ta matia tou kosmou [For impression's sake]*, a choreography by Dimitris Sotiriou.¹⁵ After this production, the company received subsidy from the Ministry of Culture for the first time (see Appendix 2), in recognition of the works' artistic merit. It thus entered the State funding system belonging to the one-year funding companies, which form the lower grade of the scheme. This was the beginning of sustained State financial support for the company, which continues until today.

ProsOlotoixos [Tour de Force] was selected to participate at the Rencontres Chorégraphiques Internationales de Seine-Saint-Denis/Bagnolet (France) in 1996,

¹⁴ The dance evening was financially supported by the budget the company acquired from the *Bathtub* commission and private sponsors.

¹⁵ *Gia ta matia tou kosmou [For impression's sake]* was set to Eric Satie's Gnossienne no. 1 and 3 and Gymnopedie no. 1, with costumes by Dimitris Sotiriou, lighting by Panagiotis Manousis and performed by Eirini Spyridakou, Linda Kapetanea, and Dimitris Sotiriou. The choreography was inspired by Satie's music and explored notions of tenderness, delicacy and human affection. The dance program was presented for five consecutive nights from 25–29 May, 1995.

and it was presented again in Athens (1996) in a double bill evening of the company. The work also provided the source for the company's next production, *Temps Tendre* (1997), created during a residency at Aragon Cultural Centre (Isère, France). For all those reasons, *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] occupies a prominent position within the company's early works, since it triggered State and international recognition, and the more extended institutional support for the company which followed from it.

The title *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] is a play on the words of the Greek expression 'pros olotaxos' and the noun 'toixos'. 'Pros olotaxos' is a naval command for moving forward, and 'toixos' means wall. The setting of the work is a wall, dominating and blocking the back of the stage. Using the wall as a point of reference, the choreography starts and finishes there, unfolding and 'moving forward' in time and (stage) space.

The translation of the title as *Tour de Force*, meaning a feat accomplished through great skill and ability, focuses on techniques and powers to accomplish a goal. In the case of choreography, it implies a corporeal state of possessed knowledge and freedom to attain a goal. Consequently, the title suggests an image of emancipatory power, of a person ready to move or conquer a new territory or simply change location, while also implying a sense of danger and risk. This motivation for moving is peculiarly in contrast with the word 'toixos' [wall], in the Greek title. A wall is an obstacle in space, which marks the limits of a territory and blocks (possible) expansion, and for that reason, the title implies as Papadamaki argues: "a desire to overcome obstacles, to transgress the limits"

(Papadamaki in Hatzopoulos, 1996[non-print]), evident in the work in movements such as jumping along the wall, climbing and reaching up.

The music of *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] was a compilation of several pieces by contemporary composers and groups (Hector Zazou, John Lurie, Michael Nyman and Balanesku Quartet), characterized by repetition, minimalism and rhythmic propulsion, and the choreography was performed by a group of five dancers (two female and three male), dressed in identical costumes.¹⁶

The cover of the programme was a series of photographs by Eadweard Muybridge (1830–1904) presenting a naked young girl in motion (Figure 3), which became the logo of the company in these early years. Muybridge's interest in capturing the moving body resulted in a series of photographs that conveyed bodily motion by repetitive figures. Through rhythm, order and harmony, Muybridge's chronophotographs documented a common human rhythm and managed to show what the eye cannot see. He revealed moments of motion that existed but were inaccessible to the naked eye. Hence, he exposed the limits of visibility by capturing the unseen, and revealing in his photographs a kind of unconscious of visibility (Gunning, 2003: 235). Repetition, human physicality and movement as unconscious, instinctual motion are also issues explored in *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*], through the manipulation of movement material in the choreography and the recurring motif of running (see pp. 171 - 177).

¹⁶ The performers were Anna-Sophia Kallinikidou, Kiki Baka, Dimitris Sotiriou, Michalis Papandonakis and Alexandros Karydis. The costumes were designed by Lena Papachristofilou, the set was designed by Apostolia Papadamaki and the lighting design was by Panagiotis Manousis.

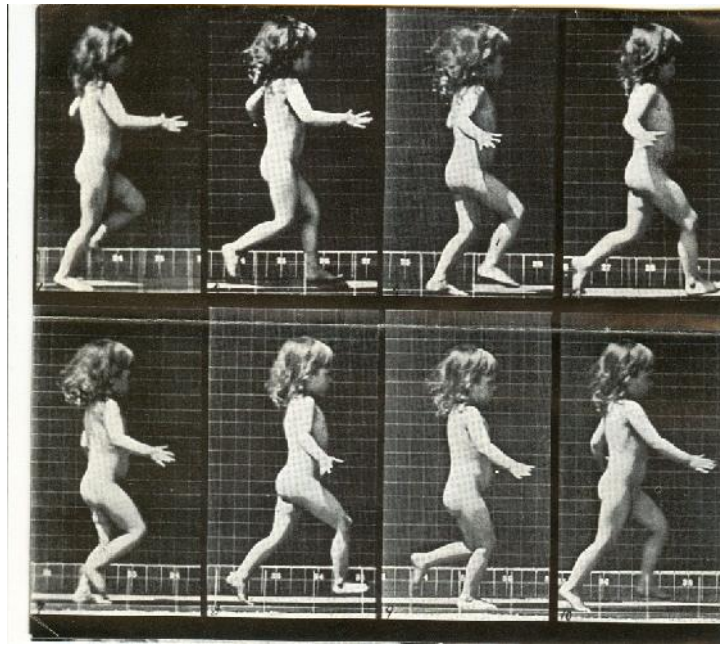


Figure 3:
SineQuaNon programme cover (1995) design: Giannis Karlopoulos

The selected image on the cover of the programme (see Figure 3) emphasises the physical and kinesthetic experience of running, while the young age of the girl and her naked body resonate with ideas about the ‘natural’ conditions of the body and instinctual movement. This condition of physicality, as opposed to movement conventions and restrictions that come gradually as a person enters processes of socialisation and bodily cultivation, seems to be inherent in the argument of Papadamaki:

I am really thrilled when seeing dancers on stage taking risks. For me, transgressing the physical and psychological limits is very exciting and this is what I am trying to do in my choreography. I want the audience to remember that when they were children they used to run and climb on walls.

Papadamaki, in Vounelaki, 1995a: 20

Papadamaki's viewpoint is situated within the late- 20th- century dance context of bodily athleticism, and stresses SineQuaNon's interest in physicality as opposed to narrative and the representation of emotional states.

According to Papadamaki, "the choreography explores different dynamics and plays with energy – soft, strong, slow, fast, up and down, coming and going" (Papadamaki in Pyrgioti, 1996: 65), evident in the work in changes of dynamics, different levels of movement (jumps, rolls on the floor, lifts) and in a fluctuating sense of movement in space which unfolds forwards and returns back (as in the beginning and ending of the work at the back wall).

The movement material was generated during the creative process in the studio through improvisational structures. "[On stage] it was not improvisational, but the movement material was generated by the dancers in the studio" recalled Kallinikidou (Kallinikidou, 2008 [non-print]), unlike later works of the company which included improvisational sections in the final work. However, this was a period of very intense and demanding preparation (Baka & Sotiriou, 2007 [non-print]; Kallinikidou, 2008 [non-print]) indicating not only the importance of this production for the company at this particular stage of development, but also, the decision to present a physically demanding work as a strong statement of their artistic identity.

Journalists have commented on the stage image of the company as being close to everyday people, and thus suggesting a connection between stage and street: "The dancers could be [people] walking amongst us, in the streets, on the city's

subway, at friends' houses or rave parties" (Pyrgioti, 1996: 65). Such remarks suggest that, in contrast to previous dance generations, these dancers presented on stage a version of the world, which emphasizes their real 'flesh-and-blood' bodies, exposed mainly in the selection of particular movement material (running, jumping, lying) which make reference to everyday movement actions. Without rejecting the conventional roles of the theatrical apparatus (the separation of stage and auditorium, the roles of performers as virtuosic objects of the audience's gaze and of viewers as onlookers) and without rejecting representation altogether, the company managed to balance theatrical illusion with a 'reality' outside theatre.

Papadamaki pointed out that "My work has hints from release techniques, physical theatre, visual elements, but also, what I now recognize, as a human resonance. It is this element which transcends choreography and appears as "real but it is not" (Papadamaki, 2007 [non-print]). Suggesting a human substance beneath representation, Papadamaki points to the double role of the dancing bodies on stage: to represent and be present. SineQuaNon bodies, with their strong and athletic energy, put conventional images of dance's elegance into dispute, and contradicted the refinement of a recognisable dance technique, offering dancing bodies which could be identified by the audience as similar to their own bodies.

On the other hand, in their work, SineQuaNon managed to bypass connections between personal expression and choreography, offering an almost 'objectified', though not impersonal, dance performance (see p. 177).

The physicality and intensity of movement used by the company in their early works, was conceived by Hassiotis as "a formalism that has not yet been

disengaged from a desire for adornment” (Hassiotis, 1997: 49), suggesting that the company exhibit physical tasks for the sake of making an impression, in a manner not justified by the work itself. Another dance critic, Clementini Vounelaki, examining in retrospect the company’s ten years of existence, suggested a crisis of creativity and identity evident in the company.¹⁷ The crisis was caused by a deadlock between “an interesting movement vocabulary, and the best dancers we have” and the inability of this combination “to be fertile and to transcribe itself into emotion” (Vounelaki, 2002: 12).

Both critiques implied that problems may arise when dance movement is the primary focus of choreography and the risks of becoming mere technical virtuosity when the work lacks, or undervalues, the function of communicating a specific emotion or feeling. Consequently, they imply that dance movement alone might have difficulty in communicating with its audience.

The same attitude was expressed by Eleftheria Kouroupi, choreographer and member of the Advisory Board for Dance of the Ministry of Culture who, in the interview for this research stated that: “I can understand what they are doing, but they cannot represent me” (Kouroupi, 2007 [non-print]). Kouroupi implied a gap between the practices of the company and the performance experiences that some people (herself among them) can be identified with, partly because of their unfamiliarity with such practices. There is, then, a part of the audience that had difficulties in appreciating movement-based works, and tended to prefer a thematic line in the work.

¹⁷ This period of crisis is also evident in Papadamaki’s withdrawal from the company (2001).

This issue reveals the tension between narrative, expression and abstraction in dance, which in the late 1980s, seem to suggest a major difference between the German Tanztheater and USA dance (Daly, 1986: 46–56). The tension between narrative and formalism in dance in Greece is further highlighted by considering the art form's strong relations to theatre in the country, which placed dance within a discourse dominated by language, and against which dance struggled to gain its independence, and by the strong influence of Pina Bausch's Tanztheater in Greece.

On the other hand, other critics framed SineQuaNon's work in different terms. Dance critic Mirka Dimitriadi-Psaropoulou pointed to the existence of competition within the dance field due to the increased number of companies. According to her, these developments did not represent an equal increase in creativity, and internal conflicts for the companies' leadership restrained many dance companies from exploring their full artistic and creative potential. For Dimitriadi-Psaropoulou then, SineQuaNon was an exceptional case in this respect. In addition, they could attain on stage "vividness and momentum" while at same time "spreading the message that dance for dance's sake is also dance for joy and for the beauty of life" (Dimitriadi-Psaropoulou, 1995b). She thus brought together the collective effort of the company, its movement language and the impact on the audience, implying that spectators' appreciation can be based on a sense of bodily movement alone, which generated optimistic feelings and aesthetic pleasure. One crucial point made by Dimitriadi-Psaropoulou was that SineQuaNon's movement material, despite the fact that it was abstract in nature (it did not tell a story), did

actually manage to communicate with its audience through non-literal means, such as the sharing of bodily states (speed, momentum and, fierce energy), and to generate feelings such as joy.

SineQuaNon's interest in physical energy and passion for movement is prominent in their early works. Hassiotis pointed out that the precision of the dancers managed to create a "sense of optimism for the future of dance in the country" (Hassiotis, 1995b: 31). In this way, the company marks its distinctiveness from other dance artists who lack such a focus (Vounelaki, 1995a: 20). Moreover, Papadamaki made an interesting link between mobility and immobility in dance and the country's position within an international context: "Movement cannot exist without immobility. Was it necessary though, for Greece to live in immobility and isolation for so long in order finally to feel the breath of dancing at the end of 20th century?" (Papadamaki, 1992: 109). For Papadamaki then, movement becomes the symbolic resolution of a series of accumulated pressures in socio-cultural terms; it not only stands for change, freedom, future, hope, but also for a sense of identity for dance artists.

The following sections of the chapter, starting with my own viewing of the recorded performance, will demonstrate that this optimism was not only relevant to dance, but also pertained to the changing social conditions which, I argue, are reflected in the choreography.

4.4. Viewing *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*]¹⁸

The choreography, lasting for, approximately, twenty-seven minutes, consists of a number of smaller sections marked by changes and contrasts in space, lighting or/and/or music. All these elements are equally important in the final composition, and operate as distinct, interdependent layers, which interact in different combinations during the choreography. The choreography starts in silence, while dim lights allow the viewer to discern five figures rolling, falling, turning, drawing away and returning to a wall at the back of the stage. As the speed and dynamics of movement change, the music is heard, only to stop later, while the movement continues, allowing the light to change and to ‘design’ a different performing area on stage.

The choreography as a whole evokes different moods, from relaxed and easy-going to vigorous and intense, with an emphasis on the acceleration of speed and energy of movement. As a consequence, these contrasts serve to create a sense of intensification. The choreography has a clear structure, which starts at the back wall and, moves forward in space towards the audience, only to return back again. The sense of a group of individuals, instead of monads, prevails, highlighted by the uniformity of costumes and their shared movement material. Performers do not represent specific (gendered) characters but, during the choreography, they enter into relationships through duet, trio or group formations which develop and then dissolve. This detachment from personal or psychological meanings is inherited from the American postmodern influences on the company, and

¹⁸ The viewing is based on a recorded performance of *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] provided by the company without any further details.

contradicts not only narrative modern dance of the past (Manou and, Pratsika) but also choreographers such as Haris Mandafounis (see pp. 81 – 82) whose works were often non-narrative, but whose movement material, a combination of Limon technique and jazz influences, was structured choreographically on criteria of harmony, musicality and form.

During the first section of the choreography, the performers roll on the wall, come away from it and catch one another as they go off balance or as they jump in the air, and climb, trying to go beyond the wall. In smaller groups or all together, they slip over, turn and support each other or against the wall. They create an ambiguous feeling of movement excitement and instability, generated by the off-balance moments and the athletic thrusts of the bodies in the air. At the same time, they build a sense of confidence and shared responsibility as performers catch each other. Suspensions and falls, differences in dynamics and flow of energy, attract the viewer's attention, as the bodies' movement, lines and forms gain force and momentum, supported by the increase of speed. The mutual trust and intimacy of the performers, as well as their raw energy, come in contrast to conventional images of elegant lifts and supports, as in a ballet pas de deux, but also to modern dance's bodily encounters. For, in *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*], lifts are performed with direct force and thrust of the body into the air, highlighting the real danger if not supported on time.

Later in the work, two dancers begin to run in a circular path, but in opposite directions, occasionally 'meeting' each other, either literally in space or by performing the same movement motif while continuing to run in a circle. The

movement activity multiplies itself. All the dancers run in circles, in opposite directions, momentarily meet and move away from each other again. There is a sense of anarchy and chaos that finds its balance and calmness for an instant, only to lose it again, but never escaping the continuous energy of the circle. The choreography creates a sense of accelerated flow and continuous energy, rendered by the circular trajectories, repetition and play with weight, speed and momentum of the bodies.

Gradually, the movement of the dancers ceases. Two dancers meet at the front of the stage, in an embrace with their arms stretching out as if they are being pulled in different directions. The momentum of running has put them into constant motion and they seem unable to confront this momentary blockage by another body, this ephemeral bodily contact which puts the body into a position of rest.

The intensification and acceleration of movement build high points in the fabric of the material which, however, do not resolve in a decrease of energy, or in explosive accents, as do conventional choreographic climaxes. Rather, this intensification of material turns into sudden stops, moments of stillness and silence, and, sometimes, semi-darkness. Dance critic Andreas Rikakis, commented that these ruptures in choreographic continuity and the multiple black-outs during the sections were undesirable features of the work because they created frustration and anxiety (Rikakis, 1995b: 14).

However, this unresolved tension and containment of energy can also create for the viewer, a sense of lack of fulfillment and an expectation for release. As

spectators witness an intense, physical experience, these slices of silence, ‘holes’ of void, and breaks, can offer moments of rest from a possible overloading of perception, which, by contrast, emphasise the intensity of previous moments. It is precisely at those moments, that the audience’s perception is activated and becomes aware of its own presence and role. Spectators at these instances, (metaphorically) immerse into the fabric of the piece by noticing and (maybe) completing the missing element, and by so doing, they become part of the community of people sharing this experience.

Running, a major movement motif in *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*], is a feature which stays with the audience for a long time. Running is a demanding physical activity, evident in different human contexts ranging from everyday life to dance and athletics. However, dance works in Greece did not, until the 1990s, use locomotive travelling in space to such an extent. This recurring movement motif of circular running explores corporeal energy and spatial ideas that register with the viewer and create an impact which critics have described as a “wild, direct, and stressful” (Rikakis, 1995b: 14). For other reviewers, this energy “brings us to a contemporary world; it is the hysteria of time moving in circles” (Pyrgioti, 1995: 65). Like a kaleidoscope, bodies approach each other in space only to spread again in multiple directions, following circular and semi-circular patterns, resembling human particles under a microscope.

My own viewing stressed that the contact of bodies, their lifts, weight-taking and support, as well as the synchronicity of movements, created for me a sense of shared confidence, solidarity and interrelatedness. The clarity of lines, precision

of patterns and floating of energy are distributed to the space around the dancing bodies and the audience. Rhythm and time in the choreography create a sense of temporal waves, unfolding within the framed theatrical space enclosed by the wall and the audience. Within this space, the dancers like insects trapped in a glass, explore and explode all possibilities of escaping. They jump, run around the space and change their bodily orientation (lying on the floor or in the arms of another dancer) as if trying to exhaust the possibilities of moving within this space, if not transcending it by escaping. As in a mathematical system of possible combinations, the dancers occupy different spaces and explore different trajectories: back, forward, straight lines, circular paths, up, down, right and left.

Peripheral parts of the body such as legs, arms or the head are used as initiators of movement or as activators for the rest of the body. The bodies do not have the rigidity of ballet, nor the agility of Graham technique. They rather foreground sensuality in moving each part of the body separately while maintaining a strong consciousness of the whole, and playing with gravity and momentum, suspension and repulsion.

A movement often repeated in the choreography is a double (or single) turn with the torso erect and the arms extended to the side at shoulder height. These turns are part of several movement sequences, without being their climaxes, as turns often are. They, rather, function as a component within a phrase, to condense, accelerate and enhance the force of movement, leading to the next movement (step, drop on the floor, run or glide). Like a windmill, this movement encapsulates all the contestation of energy, speed and force that the piece

explores. In addition, its manipulation within the movement phrase suggests a vitality which refuses to be spectacular, but embodies both control and intention for the next movement to come.

The last section is also set against the wall. Movement phrases of the first section are repeated in reverse, among which there is a moment when two dancers, lifted by two others, place their feet on the wall and imitate walking. The moment recalls Trisha Brown's *Equipment Pieces*, which she choreographed in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Brown's works "pit the illusion of natural movement against the forces of weight and gravity" (Banes, 1987: 80), resulting in a radical alteration of viewers' perception. Papadamaki's reference to childhood, instinct and 'natural' movement, at this moment, reaches a point of questioning its own construction by the explosion of the mechanics of supporting in order for the dancer to imitate walking on the wall. This scene, also, suggests a tribute to the Judson generation, a reference to the company's recent past and influences from New York. Moreover, as Brown's *Equipment Pieces* were set within the real urban architecture of New York, the inclusion of such a hint in *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] reinforces the mutual constitution of the theatre stage as urban space and the dancers as citizens of the world.

ProsOlotoixos [*Tour de Force*] is a powerful and energetic choreography, which presents a combination of physical movement (running, jumping and, rolling) and motions such as embraces and poses. It thus bridges extreme physicality with moments of energy, repose and emotional suggestiveness. As Figure 2 depicts,¹⁹

¹⁹ The photograph is promotional material, and it does not depict a particular moment in the choreography. Rather, it assembles and suggests instances of the work.

there is in the work a combination of strong physical and athletic movement and human contact. Bodily contacts, as exemplified in the catches and lifts in the choreography, evoke a sense of support, of leaning on another body or of blocking one's own body's momentum. These moments, however, do not unleash the fury of collision or violence, and, consequently, are not shocking or provocative, such as, for example, the work of choreographers such as Elisabeth Streb, whose dances involve extreme risk-taking and dramatic physical impacts between dancers and their setting (Ginot, 1999: 70–81).

However, the underlying issue for SineQuaNon is the complex relation between motion and emotion. Baka argued, “We were not mere movers. We wanted to generate a feeling.” However, she sharply distinguished between an approach to movement as a means of expression or a vehicle of emotion and an approach, which sees movement “in surgical terms” generated from within the body, which, however, can evoke emotion, even though, not in an overtly direct way (Baka in Sotiriou & Baka, 2007 [non-print]).

In the last part of this chapter, *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] is set within a range of conflicted views which participate in and reflect debates about dance more generally. The conception and use of the dancing body is central to such concerns, and maps the tensions along the lines of larger cultural issues. By implication, this perspective relates dance, culture and modernisation in a web of tensions central for this research.

4.5. Exploring physicality at home and, importing American influences: SineQuaNon's aesthetics and the body politic

The company's movement language was developed through exposure to postmodern American dance forms and in reaction to the modern techniques well-known in Greece. For SineQuaNon members, modern techniques emphasised an external predetermined form and they aimed at expressivity. SineQuaNon's members had often expressed their sense of having been deprived of dance experience, highlighting their limited and, for some members, late dance opportunities (see p. 154).

As Stacey Prickett has argued, many modern dancers worldwide started their dance careers relatively late, which may have perpetuated a (misleading) vision of “modern dance as a more accessible and less demanding dance form” than ballet (Prickett, 1997: 202). Such a view was expressed by some journalists in Greece (Kostas cited in Hassiotis 2001 [non-print]), putting modern dancers' competence into dispute.²⁰ These conditions led dance artists such as SineQuaNon to search for a different kind of familiarity with their bodies while, at the same time, they often expressed their need to explore movement as such. According to them, dance in Greece was mainly oriented towards dance theatre:

[SineQuaNon] do not understand why movement is so much neglected in the works by Greek choreographers. They do not hesitate to critique the performance *Tragic heroines inspire contemporary Greek choreographers*, presented at the Athens Music Hall, for having visual arts, music, ideas, but not dance!

Vounelaki, 1995a: 20

²⁰ In addition, there was a tendency to question the level of technique and bodily competence offered by the State School of Dance, a school closely related to modern dance and an attitude concerning the difficulties of Greek bodies for dance in general (see p. 86).

SineQuaNon's early fascination with athletic movement might partly be explained as a response to criticism of dancers' lack of technique (see p. 90), and partly, as their own acknowledgement of the vast possibilities of the human body.

The American dance philosophy of the 1960s and the 1970s, the artists associated with the Judson generation (such as Trisha Brown and, Steve Paxton)²¹ and aspects of dance experimentation such as improvisation, contact improvisation and somatic techniques, were little known in Greece. In addition, dance education in Greece was mainly European-oriented, as exemplified in systems of dance training (Lyra, 2000: 16), the performance style of many companies (Hassiotis, 1996: 308), and dance festivals' programming.²²

Until the 1990s, American dance influences were limited, an issue which is politically as well as artistically significant if set in a wider cultural and social context, where an ambiguous attitude toward the USA can be identified (see p. 76). This attitude historically resulted from the USA's interventionist policy towards the country following World War II. This ambiguity was expressed in Greece either as an opposition to the material and capitalist character of American culture or as a defense of its democratic and liberating ideals, especially those relevant to youth culture (Voulgaris, 2008: 28–31).

²¹ Until 1995, amongst American post-modern dance artists, only Steve Paxton had performed in Greece (see p. 154, footnote 5 of this chapter). The lack of dance and video-dance libraries made the familiarisation with this dance heritage even more difficult. The Kalamata International Dance Festival presented the Trisha Brown Company for the first time in 1997 and the Twyla Tharp Company in 1998. The works of others, such as Yvonne Rainer, have never been performed live, not even today.

²² For example, in the 1995 Athens Festival the presented companies were, from Europe: the Netherlands Dance Theatre, Maurice Bejart's Lausanne Ballet, the Academy of the Bolshoi Ballet and Compañía Nacional de Danza (Spain), and American Ballet Theatre and Stomp from the USA (see also p. 88, footnote 24).

Importing dance influences from across the Atlantic was culturally important not only for the effects on existing dance knowledge, but also in terms of how it reflected a wider cultural balance in Greece between Europe and the USA. The American postmodern body, seen as reflecting freedom and democracy (Banes, 1995), influenced SineQuaNon's experimental spirit and collaborative model, and provided a metaphoric image of resistance to individualism. Exchange between the members of the company and structured improvisation as a choreographic process became the hallmarks of the company's reputation as one of the few collectives in the dance field in Greece.

Sotiriou and Baka (Sotiriou & Baka, 2007 [non-print]), stressed their sense of artistic novelty as an important issue for the early stages of the company's development. SineQuaNon rejected a model of dance which stressed overt sentimentality and emotionality. In addition, the company questioned a philosophy of dance education which was mainly based on the cultivation of the body as an expressive medium. Instead, SineQuaNon proposed "dance productions based on movement", especially those movement techniques which are "based on human anatomy and physiology" (SineQuaNon, 2008 [online]). This approach to dance movement allowed SineQuaNon to explore their individual way of moving without predetermined form or external shape and to support the emancipatory bodily experience of its members.

According to Anna-Sofia Kallinikidou, this need for novelty comes from the fact that "in Greece there was no dance development. There was a gap...rigidity. Dancing matters were not evolving" (Kallinikidou, 2008, [non-print]). In addition,

she clarifies that, according to their view, the problem with the choreographies then made in Greece was their ‘descriptive and naïve character’ (Kallinikidou, 2008 [non-print]). By descriptive movement they mean an almost mimetic depiction of reality or an approach to movement as mere external form. The problem with those approaches, according to SineQuaNon, was their superficial engagement with the body and its possibilities.

Panagiotara stresses that collectivity “presupposes harmonious relationships between the members of the company, mutual respect, interdependence and reliance on one another” (Panagiotara, 2006: 43). This reliance in the choreography of *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] is evident in lifts, supports and ‘blocking’ of movement between the dancers, elements which recall contact improvisation, a dance form pertinent to the communal spirit of the 1970s radical movement in the U.S.A. (Novack, 1990).

In addition, dance forms such as capoeira and contact improvisation provide, for their participants, a way of “being-with-others in the world”, for the participants experience exchanges of weight, speed and momentum with other bodies (Albright, 2001). During these practices it is created a state in which body and mind, self and other can no longer be distinguished. Similarly, Valerie Briginshaw (2001) exemplifies how some choreographies often blur the boundaries of body and space, engaging in the rejection of the Cartesian model of subject. SineQuaNon’s practice makes similar moves as the focus of the dancer returns inwards and her/his/her awareness of movement changes. Even though, *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] was more intense and athletic than the company’s

subsequent works, it did mark a significant change in the way dancers conceive their bodies in motion in space and in relation to others. There are numerous moments in the choreography of direct contact between the bodies involving lifts, supporting moments and rolls on the floor, all executed with a continuous flow of energy and with restless effect.

SineQuaNon proposed embodiment as a “form of body consciousness which can affect your body intelligence in dance and in your life” (Sfika, 2008 [non-print]). Such movement consciousness is inwardly directed, easy-going and resists exhibitionism. Sfika commented that:

Usually in a dance class you have to sweat. You have to try hard. Energy levels are like a cardiogram. In New York we learned that it is not necessary to sweat, but it is necessary to become conscious of your body and its movements.

Sfika, 2008 [non-print]

Sfika’s comment suggests a change of approach to movement, body function and sense of self. Baka and Sotiriou also underline a new, at least for them, way of experiencing the dancing body as a process which is not focused on its external form and result, but on an internal awareness and esoteric control (Sotiriou & Baka, 2007 [non-print]).

Somatic and release techniques are considered to be “a moral form which predetermines an aesthetic of the gesture that does not speak its name: privileging sensations (proprioception), free flow, the work of weight, successive rather than segmented movement, legato rather than staccato, circular corporeal space rather than projective, economy of effort, the idea of a global body rather than a

fragmented one” (Ginot, 1999: 74). Ginot’s argument, suggests an interconnectedness of bodies and a sense of wholeness, as a result of the particular aesthetic of release techniques, which is a point of interest in SineQuaNon’s practice and contrasts with the model of the isolated individual of contemporary society (see Elefandis’s argument pp. 115 - 117).

Interdependence helped the dancers in *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] to build a sense of communication, confidence and solidarity and a unity as a group observable by the audience. However, this may also have imposed restrictions on body behaviours and movements, as Baka observed:

I never did what I really wanted to do. It was always a compromise, for everybody has to be part of it [the movement material]...I always think, even now, there is something that I haven’t danced yet: [That is the dance] I really want.

Baka in Sotiriou and Baka, 2007 [non-print]

The company’s collectivity and participatory model engendered a constant renewal of its kinetic modes; however, this also implied tensions between compromising for the group’s sake and individual freedom. Baka’s observation also raises questions about the power balances of relationships between the members of the group and between choreographer and dancers.

A dancer’s contribution to the choreographic process and final performance is very much based on each one’s way of moving and his/her particular movement experiences in training and in professional practice (Roche, 2009). Kallinikidou spoke about the interdependencies and influences within the members of the company:

Some of us were more physical and toward movement than others. But we could balance this, because we were sharing everything. However, for example, Papadamaki, who was not dancing so much,²³ allowed Kiki [Baka], the more physical of us, to provide movement material. For that reason the work had a specific style. It was of a particular kind.

Kallinikidou, 2008 [non-print]

Dance scholarship tends to overlook the interrelationship and interdependence of dancer and choreographer in the choreographic process (Gardner, 2007 [online]: 35-53). However, there is a complementary relationship between ‘art’ (choreography) and craft (dancing), which resonates with the mind/body dichotomy and is linked to the history of capitalist production (Gardner, 2007 [online]: 36). According to this argument, choreography is related to the mind as a process of rational thinking and knowledge, while dancing is related to the body as a process of experiencing. Capitalist production is characterised by a separation between labour and product, which is reflected in a similar division between choreography (labour) and dancing (product). Gardner’s point is that the act of choreographer and performer dancing together challenges this division, though the phenomenon may not be adequately presented in dance scholarship.

ProsOlotoixos [*Tour de Force*] and other works by SineQuaNon exemplify the division between choreographer-dancer and mind-body as problematic. Even though Papadamaki held the position of choreographer in the majority of the company’s works until 2002, “she did not dance. She has decided her role” (Kallinikidou, 2007 [non-print]). However, the dancers’ contribution is vital to the choreography. Unavoidably, the separation of dancer/choreographer generated

²³ Papadamaki choreographed the majority of the company’s works from 1995 until 2001.

tensions between the collaborative ideal of the company and the hierarchy created, for the company's aim was:

... to act as a nucleus for the development of art and technique of dance, through continuous research and experimentation, collaborations with a wide range of Greek and foreign artists and interchange between the roles of dancer and choreographer.

SineQuaNon, 1998 [online]

Individuality and communal spirit seem to be multilayered and complex issues that cannot be easily balanced and, in practice, such balance is often difficult to achieve. SineQuaNon today continues to use models of collective creation. However, the communal spirit has shifted its reference points, from the heritage of the Judson generation to alternative social formations and Greek folk references (Vounelaki, 2002: 11–13).²⁴

In terms of institutional resources, as the local network of venues, festivals and organisers was not able to support the nurturing of young artists in the age of Europeanisation, their need to belong to the international scene, to “exit from the ghetto” (Vounelaki, 1996b: 53) and to gain recognition in such a context had to be achieved through alternative structures. SineQuaNon artists argued that: “What is important for us is the openness to the dancing world... We really need comparing [ourselves to others] in order to find our own identity and [we have] to fight vanity and fear” (Baka in cited in Vounelaki, 1996 b: 53). They were thus

²⁴ SineQuaNon's first choreography after Papadamaki's withdrawal was based on Greek folk tales, since they regularly collaborated with director Sotiris Hatzakis who explored aspects of folk origins and rituals in theatrical contexts. In addition, SineQuaNon had created their own studio and performing venue at an old industrial building, open to other artists for classes and rehearsals, where they presented their choreographies there, with free admission. They thus provided an alternative model for producing work based on the support among artists and their audience, forming communities of people involved in these practices.

actively involved in the communication and exchange between Greek and international artists, starting to invite artists, such as Wally Cordona (1995) and Jeremy Nelson (1996), for educational activities.²⁵ SineQuaNon contributed in creating a structure for artistic communication, exchange and self-support outside the official State institutions, which helped cultivate and support the independent dance scene and artists.

4.6. Conclusion

SineQuaNon's *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] can be considered as an exploration of the idea of embodied speed, force and restless movement. The company was influenced by American postmodern dance aesthetics and philosophy. American influences in dance helped SineQuaNon to differentiate itself artistically from the dance history in the country. In other words, the company, by performing its own geographical and cultural mobility, made it possible for its own voice to be heard at that particular historical moment.

SineQuaNon proposed emancipated subjectivities on stage, which suffused the dancers' bodies and the world with a consciousness derived from sensibility and a variety of forms of embodied knowledge. In addition, the company's collaborative model stands as an alternative to individualism persistent in social conditions and in the dance field, though it also revealed the complexity of roles and power relations operating as a sub-text to the communal ideal. Part of the reason

²⁵ In the following years, SineQuaNon continued to invite foreign artists for workshops or performances; among others, they consisted of Shelley Shenter, David Zambrano, Julyen Hamilton and Mark Tompkins. In 1999, SineQuaNon organised Taxydromio, a collaborative project supported by the EU Kaleidoskopio programme, aimed at artistic exchange and mobility.

ProsOlotoixos [*Tour de Force*] impressed its audience was the fact that it referred to bodily states. Critics, audiences, and partly the choreographer herself, perceived the work as an exploration of the most commonly shared characteristic of mankind, motion.

However, this analysis has exemplified that the work embodies physical states of speed, momentum and force as metaphors for a generation of artists who wanted to ‘move forward’ and beyond predetermined ideas about the body and its potential. Dance as the art of movement became a suitable means to imagine and propose a vision of modernity as change and progress, at least in this particular national context. Innovation in dance, expressed as a new perspective on the body (release techniques, somatics and contact improvisation), supported experimentation and changes in body consciousness, which formed a new sense of identity for dancers and choreographers. These new identities in dance, through artistic practice (performances, workshops and collaborations) engaged (literally and metaphorically) larger social communities, which also included the viewers of that practice. This greater sense of community, itself a product of the new social conditions of contemporary societies, was in accord with the need for a new (social) identity within the country as a whole. In this sense, the dancing bodies of SineQuaNon became a site for playing out some of the ideologies and implications of modernisation, such as a new sense of subjectivity, of sharing and perceiving the world

CHAPTER 5 RECONSTRUCTING DANCE HISTORY AND, SUGGESTING COSMOPOLITANISM: *DAPHNIS AND CHLOE* BY OKTANA DANCETHEATRE

5.1. Introduction

Oktana Dancetheatre¹ and its choreographer, Konstantinos Rigos, have been recognised as major exponents within the generation of artists that appeared in the early 1990s, and as important forces supporting dance's renewal (Fessa-Emmanouel: 2004, 414; Vounelaki, 1999 [online]). Rigos has expressed his critical stance towards the dance history of the country (Hassiotis, 2000: 172; Rigos in Hatzopoulos, 1998 [non-print]), and his works have been critically acclaimed for pushing local dance practices in new directions. In addition, Oktana Dancetheatre has gained a reputation as one of the companies contributing to building an audience for dance, supported partly, according to some authors, by media promotion (Tsouvala, 2001: 351).

Rigos is regarded as a provocative, chameleon-like choreographer, often presented as the *enfant terrible* (Voulgari, 2003: 2) who mixed contemporary dance with pop culture (Vounelaki, 1999: 28; Hassiotis, 2008 [online]).² Ironically, his challenge to the dance establishment has resulted in his appointment as choreographer and artistic director at national institutions, such as the Chorotheatro Thessalonikis [Dance Theatre Company of the National Theatre of Northern Greece] (2001–2005), and his collaborations with the Ethniko Theatro

¹ See Introduction, footnote 1 for details regarding the spelling of the company's name.

² These connections were not evident in his early works, like *Daphnis and Chloe* analysed in this thesis. Rigos made the first explicit exploration of pop culture and contemporary dance in 1999, with his production *Ta rouxa tou aftokratora* [*The Emperor's Clothes*]. It was presented in a club and it was set on a catwalk instead of a theatrical stage.

[National Theatre] in Athens (2008, 2009) and the Ethniki Lyriki Skyni [National Opera House] (2007), as well as, numerous awards.³

Currently, Rigos is still choreographing for Oktana, even though the company no longer has a stable core of dance members. The choreographer also works as a freelance artist pursuing a career as a photographer, visual artist and choreographer/director in such diverse contexts as theatre and dance performances, fashion shows and music videos.

This chapter examines *Daphnis and Chloe*, a choreography created by Rigos in 1995 set to Maurice Ravel's (1875–1937) original score, which also earned him the accolade of a State Choreography Award. *Daphnis and Chloe* was the title of a Greco-Roman novel written by Longus, a writer who lived on the Greek island of Lesbos in the second half of the 2nd century AD. The original ballet was produced by Diaghilev's Ballets Russes (1912) and it was choreographed by Michel Fokine (1880–1942).

Rigos's choreography is examined as a reworking of an older ballet, a practice which foregrounds the need of many artists in Greece, at that time, to be part of the international dance context (see also above pp.138-139 & 185) by adapting a strategy commonly used by choreographers all over the world. This practice, however, was unusual for Greece and its symbolic value will be explored

³ The choreography *Mipos eiste tis ekdromis?* [*Have you seen the Acropolis yet?*] (1990) was awarded 2nd Prize at the Choreographic Competition 'Rallou Manou', and the duet *Ande kalimera* [*Today, Tomorrow, Now*] (1992), choreographed and performed by Rigos himself and Valia Papachristou, won 1st Prize at the same competition. Oktana Dancetheatre was also awarded the State Choreography Award for *Daphnis & Chloe* (1995), *5 Epoxes* [*5 Seasons*] (1996), *Ring* (1999) and *Treli eftyxia* [*Crazy Happiness*] (2001).

hereafter, understood as a site where artistic, historical, cultural and political issues meet.

In particular, within the network of tensions created by funding policy, audience expectations and the artistic needs of the company, the decision to rework an older ballet set Rigos's choreography in dialogue with the history of dance, but also with notions of history at large. This negotiation of the past through choreography was culturally significant: at this historical moment, as the identity of Greece in Europe had become a top political and social priority for the country. The way this dance work looks both back and forward (to the past and its modernisation for today's audience), outward (towards the international context) and inward (reflecting on Greek antiquity) suggests that it models a broader negotiation of tensions within the socio-political processes of the times.

Reworking a classic is a common practice in the international dance scene, as choreographers from diverse backgrounds have explored such possibilities. Maguy Marin's *Coppelia* (1994), Matthew Bourne's *Swan Lake* (1995) or Angelin Preljocaj's *Le Spectre de la Rose* (1993), *Parade* (1993)⁴ and *Les Noces* (1989) are notable examples. Rigos asserted that his decision to choreograph *Daphnis and Chloe* was the result of his interest in the work of Ballets Russes, and a personal challenge to confront a masterpiece of music (Hassiotis, 1994; Rigos, 2007 [non-print]), a decision following the same rationale as his production *Oi Gamoi* [*Les Noces*], created earlier in 1993. Appropriating an international practice, then, became for Rigos a strategy for supporting his

⁴ These examples are selected because their creation is chronologically near to Oktana Dancetheatre's *Daphnis and Chloe*. Mats Ek's *Giselle* (1982), however, is considered to be a reference work for this practice (Poesio, 2008: 73-106).

personal development as a choreographer and promoting a conception of dance's ability to modernise itself (see below pp. 201 - 212).

In addition to his artistic practice, Rigos has also expressed verbally and in public his positioning in relation to Greek and international dance history. In particular, referring to the personalities of Greece's modern dance history, like Pratsika and Manou (see pp. 64 - 80), Rigos pointed out their important contribution "in liberating the body from social constraints", a practice which, according to his view, can also be interpreted as "a reaction to their own social origins, to their own upper class [status]". However, Rigos suggested that these personalities were trying to ignore the ideological underpinning of their practices, which is against his own viewpoint:

I strongly believe in the ideological underpinning of things. We cannot ignore history. We cannot ignore what is going on around us

Rigos cited in Hatzopoulos, 1998 [non-print]

Moreover, he stressed his own difficulty and hesitation in identifying himself as an artist continuing such a tradition, and advocated his artistic (and social) approach as being open to the world.

I feel I cannot lean against any existing dance tradition [of my country]. I feel more like a citizen of the world. And in this world, communication is very easy. I know what a German [choreographer] does, I know what an American [choreographer] is doing ... In other words, it is not possible to ignore what is going on in the world. I learn from that, I add to that, and this is what I try to develop.

Rigos cited in Hatzopoulos, 1998 [non-print]

Consequently, Oktana Dancetheatre's exploration of older ballets can be set within an awareness of socio-cultural tensions that such orientation entails. The question then for examining Rigos's choreography is not so much how his approach revitalizes Fokine's and Ravel's ballet, but more importantly, what it can signify and how it can affect the two frameworks within which the work was set; namely the history and conventions of ballet as a genre, and the exploration of a Greek theme or Greek elements in a contemporary dance work.

Seeing from a diachronic point of view dance in modern society, according to sociologist Brian Turner, expressed both conservative processes around the formation of national idioms, and at the same time, a radical tradition of social reflection through oppositional styles (Turner, 2005 [online]: 9). A similar tension between local dance idioms relevant to the indigenous dance history, conceived as conservative, and an opposition, emanating from wider, international frameworks is clearly expressed by Rigos in his statement cited above, but also in his works.

At the same time, during the 1990s in the public sphere in Greece, there was an increased fetishisation of Greekness and an emphasis on ethnic and cultural aspects of national identity. For example, qualitative studies had shown that part of Greek citizens tended to conceive Europeans as 'other' or 'different' to the foundations of Greek tradition and collective identity (Gropas and Triandafyllidou (2009) [online]: 17).

Daphnis and Chloe as a ballet on Greek theme was believed to be accessible and appealing to Greek audiences (Rigos, 2007 [non-print]), and the press reinforced

the Hellenic theme as a point of familiarity for the audience (Vlavianou, 1995: 6; Rikakis, 1995c: 14, see also p. 77 and footnote 17 on the same page), even though, Longus's text is not thoroughly known. Other texts of ancient literature, such as for example Homer's epic poems or ancient tragedies, are included in the curriculum of secondary schools and they are widely known. The reason is that Greco-Roman novel, the genre within which Longus's text belongs, was undervalued during the 19th and much of the 20th century, comparing with classical ancient texts (Whitmarsh, 2008, [online]: 1). On the other hand, past Greek choreographers (see chapter 2) have created a repository of choreographies on ancient themes, against which Rigos's choreography was, clearly, set in opposition, as indicated by his statement included earlier in this section.

In general, the high value placed on the original ballet by Fokine (Rikakis, 1995c: 14, 1995d: 14), has artistic and cultural implications for Rigos's production. For the artist is a great challenge to confront a known work but also, discourses in the cultural field of the times focused on ways to activate the prestige of the national culture within European context. Paradoxically, as a ballet *Daphnis and Chloe* since its "first performance was already the performance of a lost work" (Morrison, 2004 [online]: 74) and the evidence of Fokine's choreography is extremely scarce (Morrison, 2004 [online]: 50). What is more, *Daphnis and Chloe* was a rather unknown ballet for the Greek audience, as, only the version choreographed by Frederick Ashton in 1952 has been seen, once, in Greece in 1966. Such perspectives then tend to simplify the connection between a work and its expected reception, prescribing though, the range of possible interpretations and directing them to particular directions.

5.2. Oktana Dancetheatre's early years

Oktana Dancetheatre was founded in 1990 by choreographer Rigos, photographer Christos Karatzolas, architect and set designer Orpina Galeou and costume designer Niki Dimitriou. The first performance of the company was in 1989 at the Choreographic Competition 'Rallou Manou', which acted as an open platform for young artists to present their work, regardless of their status (students or graduates of dance schools, professional companies or informal groups, see pp. 143 - 144). *Archondisa* [*Noble Lady*], the choreography presented, was based on archetypal characters such as the Mother, the Son, and the Angel, which made it superficial, according to the choreographer (Rigos, 2007 [non-print]). This choreographic approach was different from subsequent works, and it can be partly explained by the choreographer's immaturity as a creator.

Personal friendship among its members was the initial creative impetus of Oktana Dancetheatre. Unlike SineQuaNon, however, (see Chapter 4) Oktana Dancetheatre was strongly centred on its choreographer's vision and personality, and Rigos's need to "explore and communicate with [him]self" (Rigos, 1991: 43). Despite the fact that the company was founded by a diverse range of collaborators, the choreographer was regarded as the originator of every work and the leader of the group. Rigos's early reputation as an outsider in dance (Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004: 414; Georgakopoulou, 1999: 33-34), did not restrain him from becoming synonymous with the artistic identity of a dance company (Hassiotis,

1994: 52), a phenomenon often called *auteurism* (Schneider, 2005: 32) or *danse d' auteur* (Gore, Louppe & Piollet, 2000: 39).

The notion of the artist/choreographer as *auteur* (author) indicates a strong connection between the artist and his/her creation (here the dance), at the expense of other people's contributions, and stresses the choreographer-figure as (the only) originator of the work.⁵ In Greece, for some dance critics, the notion of the choreographer as *auteur* signals the choreographer's independence from the ideological predicament of national identity which dominated artistic practice until the 1980s (Hassiotis, 2000: 172). For others, the choreographer as *auteur*, contributes to the verification of his/her social role, for the notion suggests genuine talent. Dance, as the artistic creation of a genius, gains in cultural distinction, and, by implication, becomes one of the elite arts.

Oktana Dancetheatre took its name from the poem *Not Brazilia, but Oktana* (1965) by the Greek psychoanalyst and surrealist poet Andreas Embeirikos (1901–1975). In Embeirikos's poem Oktana refers to a utopian city of the future, full of energy, love and perpetual motion, elements which, according to Konstantinos Rigos, were very attractive to him (Rigos, 2007 [non-print]). As a consequence, the exploration of movement, outward energy and movement's possibilities for conveying emotions, feelings and ideas became the company's main aim over the years (Hassiotis, 1994: 54).

⁵ For some authors, like Rebecca Schneider, this phenomenon is related to a trend in art which links capitalist commodification with the reproducibility of artworks and the loss of their aura. Schneider argues that in reaction to these phenomena, the aura is shifted from the work to the artist, on the premise that he/she resists reproduction, and thus, the notion of choreographer as *auteur* (author) is created (Schneider, 2005: 32-33).

While the company remained active and were producing new works (see Appendix 5), Rigos studied at the State School of Dance (1991–1993). During the same period, Oktana Dancetheatre started to receive state funding (see Appendix 2), and entered into its next stage of development. Gradually, it built a reputation as a company whose works explored human conflicts and emotions through the creation of a dense experience of the body's sensuality (Hassiotis, 1995c: 36; Markandonakis, 1992: 27; Dimitriadi-Psaropoulou, 1993; Rikakis, 1994b: 14).

For example, in his award-winning choreography *Ande Kalimera* [*Today, Tomorrow, Now*] (1992), Rigos himself and Valia Papachristou expose on stage the conflict between a couple. The work was based on a simple “action-reaction principle” (Papachristou, 2008 [non-print]), exemplified in throwing, catching, and falling with a suitcase. Dressed in a dark- coloured raincoat (Rigos) and a white garment (Papachristou), they physically express anger, frustration and the bitter taste of the end of a relationship, set to an old *rebetika*⁶ song, the lyrics of which refer to a couple's separation.

In a mediated, contemporary world, Oktana's early works focused on human existence, memories, emotional conflict, and the construction of human identity, having a strong melancholic and nostalgic mood (Hassiotis, 1995c: 36;

⁶ Rebetika songs were part of the urban low-life culture of the early 20th century. The culture of rebetika was undervalued by the upper class, and the law prohibited rebetika songs during the Metaxa regime (1937-1940). After the 2nd World War, the composer Manos Hadjidakis (see p. 238, footnote 6) brought this culture to the fore and, since then, rebetika songs have formed part of the contemporary Greek music repertoire, shared by the vast majority of the population. Rebetika, as a music genre, has been widely examined as a representation of cultural resistance and as bound up with the discourse of the ‘popular’, especially during the post-dictatorship years (Sofos, 1994: 133-157). They have also been examined in relation to ethnic and world music as a form of local identity formation, exploited by the market and implicated in debates about the relation between tradition and modernity within the Mediterranean region (Holst-Warhaft, 1998: 111-150; Steingress: 1998: 151-171; Cassia, 2000 [online]: 281-301).

Sarigiannis, 1991 [online]: 26; Rikakis, 1991c: 15). The movement vocabulary (an idiosyncratic language of highly energetic movements combined with gestures and pauses), the structure of the works (fragmentation, repetition) and the way of presentation (use of materials such as leaves, children's toys or everyday items such as a refrigerator) showed a strong affiliation with contemporary German dance theatre, especially Pina Bausch. This point does not merely reflect the influence of that genre in Greece, but also, how it could fit the needs of young artists to explore their own voice.

The emergence of Oktana Dancetheatre (and SineQuaNon, see p.155) can be partly attributed to the dance infrastructure, such as public dance platforms and competitions, available at that time, which put emphasis on supporting new artists (see pp. 143-144). and on promoting dance to the public at large.⁷ However, Rigos's initiation was gradually incorporated into the dance field and he followed the normative path of professional dance education which had consequences for his artistic choices and the company's identity.

The social construction of the contemporary dancer (and choreographer) in the early 1990s involved a well-trained body, as a prerequisite for professional and artistic standards. However, dance technique was a contested issue, situated within discourses on local dance education and the international dance scene, national and international orientation, and different conceptions of mastery (see p

⁷ Indicative of this attitude is the free admission to the dance performances of Dromena. These initiatives, after 1995, gradually stopped. It was simultaneously when the Ministry of Culture started to change the structure and operation of public funding, shifting the interest to processes of evaluation, and the establishment of the notion of prestigious cultural attainment (see pp. 130 – 138).

90). Oktana Dancetheatre's dancing bodies changed after Rigos's studies at the State School of Dance (1991–1993), when a new generation of dancers graduated from the State School of Dance and became the core members of the company. Dance scholar Nina Alkalay argues in her study on the State School of Dance that in the 1990s, "the aim of the Director Deny Eftymiou-Tsekoura was the improvement of the technical level of the dancers" (Alkalay, 2002: 53, see also p. 90), an orientation which unavoidably affected the training and the abilities of its graduates.

Gogo Aroni, an early member of Oktana Dancetheatre argued that in contrast to his previous works, "Kostas [Konstantinos Rigos] started to have inclination towards more technical dancers, as a result of his experiences in the State School of Dance" (Aroni, 2008 [non-print]). Hence, body lines and clarity of movement became important requirements of the company's performers and points of interest for Rigos's choreographic exploration. Due to these changes of dancers, Rigos had the opportunity to expand and enrich his range of movement material.

Dancer Elena Topalidou, referring to the production of *Daphnis and Chloe*, remembered, "I and Roula [Koutroubeli] were taking ballet classes every day. Some others, like Fotis [Nikolaou] were still students at the State School of Dance, and thus they had a full technical training every day" (Topalidou, 2010 [non-print]). The result was obvious on stage, as critics wrote about the performers: "All of them were technically brilliant, having also great sensitivity in the expressive parts of their roles" (Hassioti, 1995c: 30), or "the eight dancers of the company (five of whom are graduates from the State School of Dance) were

spirited, energetic, technically overqualified and consistent with the mood of the choreography” (Rikakis, 1995d: 14).

Furthermore, dance education offered Rigos knowledge of dance history and a familiarity with dance traditions and codes, which he exemplified in his decision to shift his interest to dance reworkings. This decision started in 1993 with *Oi Gamoi* [*Les Noces*], a ballet originally choreographed by Bronislava Nijinska (1891–1971) for Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes (1923), and set to a composition by Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971], and continued with *Daphnis and Chloe* in 1995. Finally, as a consequence, the artistic movement identity of the company shifted from an idiosyncratic personal language to an exploration of a variety of movement styles and personal movement imaginary, each time different and adaptable to the needs of every work (Hassiotis, 2000: 172).

This combination of elements resulted in an intense sense of physicality and energy. This was used not as means of depicting a story but of embodying a state or a condition, as for example despair or joy, a point suggested by many members of the company in their interviews for this research (Topalidou, 2010 [non-print]; Bennett, 2010 [non-print]; Giatrakou, 2007 [non-print]). Rigos elaborated on how he conceived his movement language in an international context, set his own movement exploration at the crossroad of ballet and modern dance:

From the generation of the moderns I use the looseness and release [of the body], and from ballet I use stability and austerity. I want to incorporate both in what I am doing and to produce a new mixture.

Rigos cited in Hatzopoulos, 1998 [non-print]

As a consequence, the movement language of the company started to become a combination of different elements coming from different sources and recombined in a special way, making an idiosyncratic crossing of boundaries.

By 1995 Oktana Dancetheatre was an upcoming company in terms of reception and reputation, which, through its practices, explored both artistic issues and strategies for audience development. *Les Noces* in 1993 was regarded as a crucial work for the company's early reputation. Despite his status as a newcomer in the field, Rigos managed to avoid being overwhelmed by the 'weight' of Stravinsky's music (Rikakis, 1995c: 14; Hassiotis, 1994: 53), producing an artistically successful work. In addition, the company had started to create an audience and also, *Les Noces* prompted the Ministry of Culture to double the company's funding (Appendix 2) setting the expectations for the company's next work.

These material and immaterial resources and conditions framed the creation of *Daphnis and Chloe* and allowed for artistic decisions that would have been impossible to take otherwise. In addition, the production of *Daphnis and Chloe* made a significant step towards developing the conditions for presenting dance in Greece. Therefore, in the following section of the thesis the examination focuses on three different, but interrelated issues: it presents Oktana Dancetheatre's perspective on approaching *Daphnis and Chloe*, it explores tensions relevant to the notion of reworking an older work, and focuses on the particular implications for the promotion and presentation of Oktana Dancetheatre's work.

5.3. *Daphnis and Chloe*: Issues and tensions of Oktana's production

Oktana Dancetheatre's *Daphnis and Chloe* was premiered on the 3rd of February 1995 at the Apotheke Theatre in Athens, and it was performed by Fotis Nikolaou (Daphnis), Roula Koutroubeli (1st Chloe), Elena Topalidou (2nd Chloe), Maro Gregoriou (3rd Chloe), Amalia Bennett (Lyceion/Syrinx), Giannis Giaples (Dorcon/pirate), Konstantinos Rigos (Bryaxis/pirate), Horhe Perdikis-Varouxis (Pan/pirate).⁸

Both Longus's novel and Fokine's ballet referred to the story of two children, Daphnis and Chloe, abandoned in infancy on the island of Lesbos and brought up by shepherds. In adolescence they fall in love, after which, pirates abduct Chloe. She is rescued by the great god, Pan, and restored to Daphnis amid general rejoicing.

The original libretto by Fokine was divided into three scenes. The first one is set in a meadow where, in front of a cave, there is a sculpture of three nymphs. While Daphnis, a young shepherd, is following his flock, young girls enter bringing baskets with fruits for the nymphs. Chloe also joins, but when the young girls dance with Daphnis she feels jealous. The cowherd Dorcon appears. He is fond of Chloe and after a dance he tries to kiss her. She offers her cheek, while at the same time Daphnis pushes him aside. The young girls propose a dance contest between Daphnis and Dorcon, with a kiss from Chloe as the prize. Dorcon dances an awkward dance, full of clumsy movements, while Daphnis dances a graceful,

⁸ The credits for the performance also included: lighting design by Panagiotis Manousis, set design by Andonis Daglidis, costumes by Nikos Natsoulis, installation outside the theatre by Lydia Venieri and Kimonas Skassis.

harmonious dance and wins the contest. After Daphnis and Chloe's embrace, the girls take Chloe away, leaving Daphnis alone and immobile, as if hypnotised. He lies in the grass, and then Lyceion,⁹ a girl who is in love with him, enters and performs a seductive dance in front of him.

The Fokine-Ravel creation presented Daphnis as not succumbing to Lyceion's seductive charms (Mawer, 2006: 85), unlike Longus's text, and so the girl runs off, mocking him, while cries and sounds of war can be heard. Pirates chase young women, among them, Chloe, and they finally capture her. Daphnis, in despair, curses the deities for not protecting her and falls at the entrance to the cave. The three nymphs come to life, take Daphnis and bring him before the statue of the god Pan, where he prostrates himself in supplication.

The second scene is set in the pirates' camp, near the sea. Bryaxis, the leader of the pirates, orders Chloe to dance and, while dancing, she tries, unsuccessfully, to escape. As Bryaxis tries to carry her off, the god Pan appears and saves her. The third and final part also takes place in the outdoor setting of the first scene; however, it is at dawn. Daphnis wakes up, and Chloe appears together with other shepherdesses. The old shepherd Lammon explains to them that Pan's intervention was manifested in the memory of the nymph Syrinx, with whom he was in love. Daphnis and Chloe mime the story of the god Pan and Syrinx. During the story, Daphnis/Pan plays the flute and Chloe/Syrinx dances. They express their love for each other, and the young girls, dressed as bacchantes, rush on stage and dance, while Daphnis and Chloe embrace.

⁹ The spelling of the heroine differs in different sources; it can be found as Lyceion (Mawer, 2006: 90; Lyce[n]ion, Mawer, 2000: 147), Lisinion (Fokine, 1961: 197; Beaumont, 1981: 98) or Lykanion (Vaughan, 2004 [online]).

Oktana's production generally followed Fokine's libretto; however, as the aim was the exploration of sexuality and a contemporary re-reading of the story, Rigos made radical changes; for example, he included a rape of Chloe by the pirates, instead of the original rescue in Longus's text and Fokine's ballet, the fulfillment of the sexual fantasy of Daphnis, and sexual intercourse between Daphnis and Lyceion. As a consequence of these changes, the approach taken by Rigos had a darker and sharper character than the idealised pastoral love story of Fokine.¹⁰

The programme notes include two texts and a series of drawings of the choreography's scenes, created by painter Kyriakos Katzourakis. The first text, written by dance journalist Andreas Rikakis, provided information on productions of the ballet, since its first performance in 1912. This background information set the historical dance context within which the audience was expected to place Oktana Dancetheatre's production.

The second text, written by Rigos, described the different scenes of the work in a way that blurred the boundaries between the author of the text (Rigos) and the voice that speaks in the text (Daphnis). The text was written in the first person, implying a confessional mode, and only at the end does it become clear that the text describes the narrative of the choreography, as it closes with a declaration for the audience:

This is what you are going to see, Ladies and Gentlemen, with or without the mask of your ageless innocence.

Rigos in Oktana Dancetheatre (1995) [programme]

¹⁰ Ravel's input during the creation of the original ballet has been examined as the reason for reducing dramatic violence and overt sexuality in the ballet, while increasing the child-like innocence elements of the story (Mawer, 2006: 84).

In this last sentence of the text, the role of the spectators was stimulated through this calling and their interpretations were summoned under the scope of the ‘mask of innocence’. The reference to a mask implies a superficial, even pretentious behaviour, concealed under a social façade, as the removal of sexuality that Ravel wanted to put in the ballet (see p. 203, footnote 10). In addition, this mask is going to be challenged in the choreography by the rape scene, as a violent act which subverts the normality of social etiquette and the innocent pastoral love story.

The inside space of Apotheke Theatre was transformed to represent the interior of an old mansion. Large reproductions of Sir Frederick Leighton’s (1830–1896) *Idyll* (1880–1881) and John Williams Waterhouse’s (1849–1917) *Echo and Narcissus* (1903) and *A Naid* (1905), one on each wall of the performance area, covered the entire surface of the wall, depicting bucolic scenes. Outside the theatre, painter Lydia Venieri created an installation of trees and flowers transforming the entrance of the theatre into a passage from the urban environment into a different world, that of nature. The setting, inside and outside theatre, makes references to nature and culture, however, in a way that reveals their complexity and constructed character. For example, the use of paintings which depict nature instead of real landscapes, or the installation outside the theatre which suggests entering a natural environment (such as a cave or a forest), but instead, the hall of a mansion is waiting the spectators to take their seats.



Figure 4:

Oktana Dancetheatre - *Daphnis and Chloe* (1995) Photo by: Christos Karatzolas

Inside the theatre, chandeliers were hanging from the ceiling, and a large mirror was placed in the middle of the rear wall (see Figure 4). This architectural setting and the lack of proscenium stage created a space which encompassed both the audience and the performers in the interior of an imagined mansion, as they co-habited this space. Furthermore, the close proximity of the audience's and the dancers' space created the conditions for the audience to experience the performance in an intimate setting, and it maximised the effect that the physicality and energy of the dancers might have on the audience.¹¹

However, my viewing of the video-dance of *The Rape of Chloe* (see p. 34) – an adaptation, for the camera, of the scene at the beginning of the second scene of the theatre work – reinforces this sense of intimacy. Filmic devices, such as the

¹¹ This is an experience recalled from memory and inferred from the visual material, as the viewing of the video recording does not fully support such a reading.

movement of the camera, close-ups and cuts, translate the physical intensity of the bodies into visual rhythm, which is shaped by the camera and shared by the video spectator and resonates with my own memories of the live performance.

The mirror on the back wall of the theatre reflected the dancers' movements from a perspective opposite to that of the audience, providing a 360-degree view of movement, which can enhance the experience of the action, but also helped creating the environment of a mansion's interior. The mirror, also, reflected the sitting spectators, while they were watching the performance, and by so doing, it directed their gaze back to them. By consequence, the mirror highlighted the spectators' role, and revealed the convention of theatrical apparatus.

For the first time Rigos followed an original music score exactly,¹² without introducing pauses, silence, spoken words or other musical intervals, as he did for example in *Oi Gamoi* [*Les Noces*] where he included traditional Russian folk songs in Stravinsky's score. As a result, the choreography for *Daphnis and Chloe* seems to have continuity in time and its narrative progresses in linear form, in contrast to the fragmentary structure of the choreographer's other works. The continuous deployment of the plot, even though unusual for Rigos, it can be explained as a reference to Fokine's innovations in ballet history. In particular, in the early 20th century, Fokine was proposing an expressive form for ballet, uninterrupted by applause, and his aim fitted Ravel's aim to compose "a vast

¹² Rigos often used a combination of different music selections and styles, ranging from the original music of the ballet to traditional Russian songs and prose, as in *Oi Gamoi* [*Les Noces*] (1993) or specially commissioned music as in *Mnimi ton Kyknon* [*Swan Lake City*] (2002). He also used compilations of rebetika (see also p. 196, footnote 6) and retro songs as in *Room 5* (1991), or classical music and specially commissioned contemporary music, as in *5 Seasons* (1996). This strategy of music assemblages, according to dance critic Andreas Rikakis, "is certainly harder, as it entails high risk and calls for a tremendous creative ability ... in order not to betray the musical, stylistic, dramaturgical, and finally, aesthetic result" (Rikakis, 2000: 174-175).

musical fresco” (cited in Mawer, 2000: 143), and Rigos used these historical frames as a base for his own exploration.

The production of *Daphnis and Chloe* by the Ballets Russes was a further step within the Franco-Russian ballet tradition, which had its roots in the imperial companies of the czarist Russia and continued with the reforms of the productions by Diaghilev’s company. For Rigos, the story of *Daphnis and Chloe* provided a link to a kind of national cultural past but, more importantly, it was loaded with dance historical significance.

Dance scholar Vida Midgelow, in examining the notion of reworking a ballet, demonstrates the difficulty of arriving at a simple definition of the term ‘reworking’. She suggests a crucial distinction between reworking and other processes of restaging dances of the past, such as reconstruction or revival, and the major difference is that reworkings engage in a dialogue with the tradition of dance rather than securing it (2007: 10). Choreographers engaged in such a dialogue with a past ballet exemplify a vivid process in which they have “contradicted, criticized, dislocated, updated, celebrated, refocused and otherwise reimagined the ballet on stage” (Midgelow, 2010: 47). For that reason, reworkings can be considered as “palimpsestuous texts that evoke a particularly bidirectional gaze, as they are within a double frame simultaneously evoking and questioning their sources” (Midgelow, 2007: 10).

The double frame of evoking and questioning the original work might lead to a range of possible explorations. In particular, reworkings of a ballet may:

embody both the liberating potential of counter-practices while also exploiting the cultural status of ballet. Thereby the historical form (the ballet) is fulfilled and lost, uncritically celebrated and questioned [emphasis in the original]

Midgelow, 2007: 27

Within this spectrum, issues of power are embedded. As Midgelow argues, what is at stake is the power of the dance canon and its potential commodification (Midgelow, 2007: 32). For Rigos, the tensions and power implications of ballet history and the canon have ramifications on two fronts: firstly, the tensions inherent in reworking a Greek theme by a Greek choreographer, and secondly, the relation of this process to a particular cultural vision of the times, which saw contemporary Greek culture as engaged in a renewal of the country's past. It could then be suggested that the artistic practice of reworking, set in the historical and cultural context of Greece in mid-1990s, could be a malleable concept with artistic and socio-cultural resonances.

Rigos admitted the promotional potential of his choice, based on the demand of (local and international) markets for local/national products, and he argued that it would be a challenge for him to choreograph *Daphnis and Chloe*, and that “the work has a Greek theme and for that reason, it could more easily be presented abroad” (Rigos, 2010 [non-print]). *Daphnis and Chloe* seemed to offer an attractive prospect in terms of the demands of international artistic promotion, based on a rationalisation of dance from Greece as a “European Elsewhere” (Lepecki, 1998: 40). This ‘otherness’ of production emanated from the theme of the work that referred to Greek antiquity and thus, to a faraway past. For that reason, it was believed that the work could be promoted to the European or

international scene, based on the absence of contemporary Greek dance artists in international festivals.

At the same time, it might also provide the possibility of negotiating what contemporary dance from Greece could be; in other words, how a known work could be presented in a new format to appeal to contemporary audiences, representing Greece. Such a decision is risky, as reworkings might use the original (highly valued) work as a way of attracting programmers, media attention and audiences (Midgelow, 2007: 32), and by so doing, raise and create a particular set of expectations about the nature of the work, which the new dance will either meet or disappoint.

In addition to international promotion, Oktana Dancetheatre was also pursuing to develop its Greek audience. For that reason, choreographers Konstantinos Rigos Mary Tsouti¹³ and Konstaninos Mihos¹⁴ initiated an unusual practice for dance performances. They selected an abandoned theatre venue named Apotheke and used it for presenting their productions for a series of performances. Their aim was to counterbalance the lack of venues available for staging dance and to create the conditions for building an audience for dance (Mani, 1995: 3). The theatre was located in the underdeveloped area of Psyri in the centre of Athens: an area that,

¹³ Mary Tsouti (b. 1947) is regarded as a seminal figure of contemporary dance theatre in Greece. She studied dance in Greece and in the USA, at the schools of Martha Graham Erick Hawkins and Merce Cunningham. She founded her company, Analia, in 1984 and experimented with a diverse range of collaborators from a variety of art forms, exploring motion and expression through slow movement. During the mid-1980s, performers in her company were the core members of Edafos Company examined in the next chapter.

¹⁴ Konstantinos Mihos (b. 1960) studied film directing at the Stavrakou School in Athens and then dance at the State School of Dance. In the USA he attended composition classes with Sara Rudner, but also studied improvisation, body-mind centering and contact improvisation. He founded the company Lathos Kinisi [Rong Movement] in 1988 and he is one of the first choreographers in the country who used contact improvisation as a movement language, and improvisation as an on-stage practice.

during that time, underwent regeneration and was transformed into a main cultural area of the city. The decision was seen as an opportunity for the companies to build an audience for their work and also to create a meeting point for dancegoers on the theatrical map of the city (Mani, 1995: 3). In particular, *Daphnis and Chloe* was performed for more than a month (33 performances) during February–March 1995.¹⁵

In the drive for audience development, there were tensions between cultural elitism and market pressures. According to the elitist approach, diffused in Greek cultural policy (Zorba, 2009 [online]: 254) and public discourses on culture, dance should resist commodification and market pressures, and a big audience suggests a decline in art's quality. Inherent in those attitudes is a distance from, and distaste for, the masses. Early in his career, Rigos argued that “a developing relationship of the audience with new dance” is important, but he went on to clarify that this effort should not treat dance “as commercial product but as a truthful expression” (Rigos, 1991: 44). Rigos then suggested that new dance can reach an audience and it is important to develop this relationship further, based on the dance's ability to affect the audience, and to communicate in a deep and truthful way. What he stresses, then, is that in order to ensure that dance communicates a suitable frame would be its truthful expression rather than its commercialised image of entertainment. Such beliefs exemplify a faith in the body's power and communicative potential, deeply rooted in historical modern dance's principles, and pertinent to the country's dance education (see pp. 91 - 95).

¹⁵ The capacity of the venue was approximately 130 seats.

The company wanted to be positioned in between the accessible and the artistically vanguard or experimental. According to Gay Morris, dance agents usually relate avant-gardism to values such as “seriousness of purpose and dedication to art, manifested in small audiences of peers and general impoverishment” (Morris, 2001: 60), or, in other words, what sociologist Pierre Bourdieu called “the field of cultural production or the economic world reversed” (Bourdieu, 1993: 29–73). In the case of *Daphnis and Chloe* the vehicle for bridging seriousness of purpose, artistic exploration and audience engagement was the selection of this theme.

The production of *Daphnis and Chloe* was surrounded by a tension between two different ideas on dance. On one hand, there was the perspective that a small audience is constitutive element of an experimental art form. On the other hand, there was the issue of audience development as a need of the dance field to open its communicative potential and counterbalancing its elitist character. The potential audience for *Daphnis and Chloe* was much greater than the usual dance audience, for, as Rigos argues (Rigos, 2010 [non-print]) the size of the audience stemmed from the company and its members creating a large network of social relationships through collaborations in different cultural contexts, such as theatre, television and opera. Consequently, the company’s cultural capital was enhanced by “hip capital” (Wulff, 1998: 47–48), meaning the capital built up through network links with famous people in media and show-business culture. Specifically, Rigos and Oktana were collaborating, since 1992, with Theatro Technis of Karolos Koun [Karolos Koun Art Theatre Company], one of the most respected and well-known theatre companies. In 1994, Rigos choreographed for

the opera production of *Manuel Salinas*, a production for the Athens Festival performed by the Ethniki Lyriki Scene [National Lyrical Theatre]. In addition, the company appeared in the extremely popular weekly, television comedy *Deka Mikroi Mitsoi* [*Ten Little Mitsoi*] (see also p. 237-238, footnote 5). It was not surprising then, that in some press reviews the premiere was presented as an artistic and social event (Sarigiannis, 1995: 38).

Therefore the context of the production was fraught with tensions between, on the one hand, a promotional agenda and on the other, the artistic aims of the company. In the longer term, this kind of practices, such as the use of Apotheke, established the strategy of presenting dance in specially selected venues for a series of performances. As a consequence, the ability of dance artists to define the conditions of presentation and promotion of their work was enhanced, and the strategy contributed in building a relationship between dance companies and their audience.

5.4. Viewing *Daphnis and Chloe*¹⁶

As the lights gradually go up, the shadows on the walls and the half-light give the impression of a forest at night. In the semi-darkness someone is running along the stage; another figure stops her. The female dancer (Amalia Bennett) is pulling outward, suspended forward as a male dancer (Horhe Perdikis) holds her waist. They tenderly embrace one another and she lies on the floor, while he is kneeling behind her. The man tenderly manipulates her arms and body, transforming her

¹⁶ The viewing was based on a recording of the final rehearsal, provided by the company without any further details. In addition, there was a recording of excerpts from a performance of the work, also provided by the company without further details.

shape on the floor. He bends her arms, rolls her on the floor and finally, with sharp, broken movements, he gets up and imitates the playing of the pipe. At this moment the audience can identify them as Pan and Syrinx.

The shadow forest is transformed into the interior of a mansion, within which the dancers emerge from the mansion's wallpaper. As the music reaches a crescendo, another dancer (Fotis Nikolaou) enters from the downstage right corner. He is bare-chested and his underwear is decorated with flowers and plants. His limbs are extended into geometrical lines in space; an arm reaches upward as the leg is rising to the back. He often stops momentarily in those positions, as he wanted to project an image. Then he rises with sustained dynamics, as if expressing his determination and strong will. His costume is different from that of the others; he is half naked while the other dancers are dressed in trousers, suits and boots, for the men, and white dresses, for the women. Daphnis, due to his embellished garments and naked torso, distinguishes his presence among the formality of the evening suits worn by the other dancers; consequently, his appearance suggests his connection to nature.

Groups of people, who present themselves, one by one, to the audience, dance a small sequence of steps, alone or in duets and trios. Their clothing clearly indicates their gender: female dancers wear dresses, and male dancers wear trousers. However, each one is different from the other: one dress is shorter than the others, one female dancer wears flowers around her wrists, and one male dancer is barefoot in contrast to the other who wears combat boots. In that sense,

there is not a unified *corps de ballet*, nor principal dancers. All dancers are part of a company within which everyone stands as individual.

Their movements combine the stamina and control of ballet but also the release of energy and play of weight of modern dance. In addition, the movement's fabric is enhanced by gestures such as touching body parts, or a momentary stretching of a performer's arms and torso upwards as if awakening from sleep, as well as mimetic gestures, such as Pan's playing of the flute.

The choreography consists of group and duet sections which follow one another without interruption. The three scenes of the plot are structured around the three duets of Daphnis with the (three) Chloe(s) in Rigos's choreography, suggesting the passing of time as Chloe grows up, but also, exposing her fragmentary identity formation, in accordance with contemporary notions of identity as a process of becoming.

The first duet by Daphnis (Fotis Nikolaou) and Chloe (Roula Koutrobeli), is a light, playful piece, during which they chase, lean and lift each other in ways that refer to the classical *pas de deux*, but also differ from it; for example, they roll on the floor, they have flexible torsos instead of classical upright positions, they use different *port de bras* and their movements are free flow, suggesting a carefree atmosphere, innocence and naivety. In addition, minute, almost realistic gestures, such as a bite at Chloe's plait from Daphnis or a touch by Chloe on Daphnis' genitals, remind the audience that what they are actually observing is a new reading of an old work.

As the choreography unfolds, the innocent duet is followed by a change in atmosphere. The chandelier goes up, lighting the whole stage, to create a scene resembling a ballroom event taking place in the mansion. All performers dance in couples, with body and arm positions similar to social dance couples, which, however, are interchanged with unusual lifts, rolls and suspension of bodies, deconstructing the formality of a ballroom dance.

Dorcon's dance, in his competition with Daphnis, is based on contractions and jerky movements. Although organised and controlled initially, Dorcon's body seems to lose control and frequently falls to the floor. Dorcon's erotic desire and his peculiar bodily reaction create small movement references to Nijinsky's *L'Après Midi d'un Faune* (1912), like the profile posture on rise with his fingers held together, the index stretching out and the palms pointing downwards. In the depiction of Dorcon, Rigos refers to half-human creatures, pushing the boundaries of his identity to blur nature and culture in his uncontrollable eroticism. A similar reference to Nijinsky's choreography is also evident at the end of the solo where Dorcon lies prone on the floor, and reaches a climax while his torso arches backwards, suggesting sexual pleasure, as in the last image of the Faun in Nijinsky's choreography.

In contrast, Daphnis' solo is graceful and harmonious, and evolves into a love game with Chloe during which both take off their clothes and run carefree around the stage before they exit, both facing upstage as though they are progressing toward a common future. Near the end of the first scene, Daphnis is sitting on the

floor, at the front edge of the stage, with his back to the audience, watching the spectacle with us.

Five naked dancers, three women and two men, stand centre-stage looking at the audience. Slowly they begin to move, shifting their weight from the front foot to the back foot in a ballet fourth position, lifting their legs and placing their hands on their hips, while gradually the speed of their movements increases. Suddenly they start jumping and throwing up their arms and legs, dancing the twist and, finally, erupting into a game of tug around the stage. As if they are playing an adult game they pinch each other, sit astride the back of someone who is on all fours, making the children's "ride-the-horse" game take on sadomasochistic allusions, or they do handstands, turning the body's orientation upside down, as if the order of the world has been overturned.

The rape of the second Chloe is the opening and central theme of the second scene. Two strong images stay with the viewer: in the first one, Chloe is lying down and the pirates walk rhythmically in time with the music around her as every once in a while one of them drops his body on top of her. The 'danse guerrière' of Ravel, has been argued to express the primitive celebrations of the pirates (Mawer, 2000:148), which is transformed in Rigos's work from an exotic primitivism to heterosexual brutality.

In the second image, Chloe stands centre stage, in profile, in an arabesque position, with her right leg raised in the air behind her. One arm is stretching in front and the other one is bent at the elbow, above her head. She stands motionless

but solid as a statue, reminding one of the sail of a boat breaking the waves. She remains on the spot, while the pirates walk around her on all fours, throw their bodies on the floor, stamp their feet and run about. There is a strong contrast between the intense and dynamic movement of the pirates and Chloe's total stillness – a strong stance that gives a feeling of resistance to the violence she is subject to. Her movement position, coming from ballet vocabulary, is in contrast to the physical actions and bound flow of the pirate's movements, as a depiction of the clash of 'Western' culture and 'primitive' nature.

Chloe's solo, which follows, is characterised by movements that foreground opposite forces within her body. For example, she unfolds her foot in front, while the arms and torso pull her backwards until the resolution of the tension leads her to fall on the floor. Alterations between movements extending outwards from the body, in small, sudden steps or leaps, give the impression of psychological confusion and despair. A large part of the solo takes place on the floor, as Chloe seems to lose balance constantly from a standing position, and she surrenders, and falls. At the end she hides her face in her palms and, with her back turned, approaches the audience with small steps. When she turns to face the audience, the darkness of the stage around her emphasizes her lonely presence. Bryaxis, the leader of the pirates, comes and stands beside her. For a while they both stand still, like a photograph of the bride – wearing a white dress – and the groom – wearing a suit. Bryaxis makes a series of movements while touching his own body parts – eyes, hips, and clothes – and at the end he bites Chloe on the cheek in an absurd kiss. Chloe, blinking her eyelids, tries to recover, to 'wake up' from the nightmare.

The third duet of Daphnis and Chloe evokes a general mood of calmness and serenity, without points of climax or images that linger with the spectator. The work continues with all characters on stage forming sparse duets, trios and ensembles, with many changes in levels, from standing on the floor to leaps and lying again on the floor, all varied and performed in quick succession. The original solo of Chloe, danced in the original ballet, after her reunion with Daphnis, is performed by the three Chloes, with movement material coming from the nude scene. In that sense, the world of fantasy (the nude scene) corresponds with reality, which, as the music is played by a flute, resonates with exotic elements. Erotic and exotic become two sides of the same coin, which support each other, and the constructed nature of both is stressed in the work. The choreography ends with a game of cards, much like strip poker, during which whoever loses takes off one piece of clothing, until – to conclude the whole work – they all pounce on one dancer, the one performing Dorcon, as he unbuttons his trousers.

The overriding impression of the work is one of physical excitement and clarity of form. The movement language is a mixture of balletic steps, such as arabesques, attitudes and passés, elements of modern dance techniques such as swings, drops and arches, but also movements such as throwing the body into the air or rolling on the floor. In addition, there are gestures like the one performed by Roula Koutroubeli as young Chloe, consisting of the two index fingers pointing below the eyes to represent crying, a brushing of the hand on the face as it turns to the

side, dancers touching each other's and their own genitals, and mimetic gestures, such as Horhe Varouxi's/Pan's movements imitating the playing of a flute.

The three sections of the music are choreographed by Rigos for the three different dancers who portray Chloe in different phases of her life. The first one is young and innocent, the second is violently introduced to adolescence through her rape, and the third is mature and full of life knowledge. Hassiotis, in her examination of Oktana's ten years of existence, examining Rigos's characteristic choreographic strategies, referred to the use of multiplicity and duplication as choreographic devices (Hassiotis, 2000: 172-173). She identified multiplicity as the splitting of a character into different parts, and duplication as the accumulation of different theatrical personae in one performer's body (Hassiotis, 2000: 172-173).

The consequence of these devices for the audience is a condition where the spectators may follow the whole atmosphere of the work instead of trying to identify the characters in each instance. In doing so, the spectators are encouraged to transcend the need to closely follow the narrative and instead to freely navigate their understanding during the viewing. In other words, in moments when there is no clear line of thematic deployment or of narrative development, such as the scene of the three Chloes dancing together, it is not easy for the audience to comprehend and explain the scene based on the narrative alone. Spectators then may follow the movement material or the dynamics of the scene and perceive its meaning in a framework of references larger than the narrative alone, although not in an arbitrary fashion but determined by the work itself.

In *Daphnis and Chloe* the device of multiplicity is applied in the portrayal of Chloe by three different dancers, while duplication is evident in the double roles of Lyceion/Syrinx, performed by Amalia Bennett, Dorcon/pirate, performed by Giannis Giaples, and Pan/pirate, performed by Horhe Perdikis-Varouxis. Despite the practical reasons for such choices (only eight dancers),¹⁷ this device became a driving force in the structure of the choreography as the dancers remained on stage from beginning to end, providing a constant link between the ensemble scenes.

Central to the dance is the relationship of Daphnis to the three ages of Chloe and their sexuality. In contrast to the original ballet, the female homogenised *corps de ballet* of shepherdesses is missing, and the performers constantly change positions between characters in the narrative and group dances involving both genders. In *Daphnis and Chloe*, ballet movements were performed in a more energetic and free-flow manner than classical technique required, often bringing the bodies off balance and onto the floor. This style of movement was selected deliberately as, according to the choreographer, “it fitted the subject matter” (Rigos, 2007 [non-print]), explaining that the movement material was selected as relevant to the heritage of the music and the work as a ballet of the early 20th century (cited in Vlavianou, 1995: 6) rather than its Hellenistic text.

In addition, Rigos’s choreography excludes any reference to supernatural interference (such as Chloe’s rescue by Pan) inherent in Longus’s story and Fokine’s ballet, and reiterates its focus on human actions and feelings. This

¹⁷ This fact was identified by Rigos during our personal interview.

sensibility relocates the tensions of the narrative, not within the conflicts of human fate and supernatural powers, but within personhood and people's behaviour, contributing to a contemporary perspective on the narrative.

5.5. Generating controversy: *Daphnis and Chloe*, Greekness, nudity and the role of the media

The majority of reviews and articles on *Daphnis and Chloe* reflected its critical acclaim and positive reception. Critics referred to the impressive set, the expressiveness but also the technical competence of the interpreters, and the use of nudity and movement exploration as contributing to a contemporary 're-reading' of the original story (Rikakis, 1995c; Sarigiannis, 1995; Hassiotis, 1995a; Dimitriadi-Psaropoulou, 1995a).

Despite these interpretations, *Daphnis and Chloe* provoked considerable controversy, even causing a debate in the Greek Parliament about the limits of dance and how dance performance should be defined. The debate was initiated by the ex-Minister of Culture of the right-wing Government (1992–1993), Dora Bakogianni (anon, 1995 [online]: 10) when questioning the Minister of Culture, Thanos Mikroutsikos, about his dance policy. She referred to the selected funded companies and the nomination of *Daphnis and Chloe* for the State Choreography Award accusing the Ministry of prejudice in the selection. She also questioned the criteria according to which the Minister of Culture valued a performance as dance (anon, 1995 [online]: 10). The political rhetoric evident in Bakogiannis's comments also implied a public debate about morality and tolerance, which

reveals some interesting facets of how dance might have been viewed by some spectators at this time.¹⁸

The discourses on dance in the country (see chapter 2) have stressed the connection of dance to theatre and especially ancient drama. The underlying ideology of this perspective is the major strategy of modernity, namely exclusion as a means for confronting the fear of contamination by the ‘other’. In the case of ancient drama, there is a tendency to conceive dance as part of a national heritage with ancient roots, and by the same token, to exclude any other influences in order to build a sense of national pride and indigenous cultural history.

If we place Rigos and his choreography in the context of anxieties about the modernisation of the country and the role of culture, his work can be read as an account of cosmopolitanism, defined as a methodological concept which seeks to understand the ‘other’, be it the nature, other civilisations or other modernities (Beck, 2002 [online]: 17-18). Cosmopolitanism is conceived here as a web of interconnections between international and local cultures, which exist not as polarities but as “mutually implicating principles” and this interconnection can “transform the quality of the social and the political inside nation-state societies” (Beck, 2002 [online]: 17). Rigos’s work referred to a dialogue between a Western perspective and a Greek theme, bringing a different content to this dialogue. He connected ideas about ancient Greece and used them as malleable sites of negotiating issues of a (supposedly) lost paradise of innocent past, of brutality of human behavior and of the complexity of the notion of civilisation,

¹⁸ Dance anthropologist Helen Wulff had examined similar cases of dance performances in Ireland using the notion of ‘moral politics’ referring to processes of negotiation and public debate over morality (Wulff, 2003: 180).

while at the same time, brought to the fore the traces of the cultural history of the work.

Different ideas about dance and its content and function which became evident at that particular moment in history were not irrelevant to the emergence of the new generation of artists in the hierarchy of the dance field and their artistic explorations. Eleni Kefalou-Hors, a eurhythmics teacher and former student of Koula Pratsika, belonged to the older generation of dance practitioners and in an article in Choros [Dance] magazine, one month after the production of *Daphnis and Chloe*, without referring clearly to any specific work, argued:

Have you seen a performance that you will remember next year?
Some moments of these performances might be very impressive for
their provocative expressive means. But where is dance when there is
no decency?

Kefalou-Hors, 1995: 3

Kefalou-Hors argues that provocation is used for superficial reasons, without contributing to dance as a serious art form. On the contrary, such means are seen to compromise dance's moral and ethical dimensions, bringing to the fore important questions: Why did new dance (and *Daphnis and Chloe* in particular) generate a fear about moral decency? What are the ideological repercussions of such an attitude, taking into consideration the tensions within the dance field as a consequence of the changes brought by the new generation of artists?

My viewing of the work suggests that nudity and the notion of Greekness can be proved to be sites of ambiguity. This ambiguity refers to, on one hand, envisioning new representations of 'Greek' dancing bodies, as relevant to

modernisation of cultural representation at large, and on the other, on promoting a work using its potential shock-value. For that reason, an examination of the issue of Greek elements and the use of nudity as used in *Daphnis and Chloe* by Oktana Dancetheatre will be the focus hereafter.

For Michel Fokine, the original choreographer of the ballet, and Maurice Ravel, the composer of the ballet's score, antiquity provided a setting and a source of fascination, as well as validation, due to the theme's symbolic value (Morrison, 2004 [online]: 50–76). For, ancient Greek and Roman past were considered to be the origins of Western civilization, (see also pp. 95 - 102), but in addition, late 19th and early 20th century was an era fascinated by “things Greek” (Naerebout, 2010: 43).

In particular for his libretto, Fokine came in contact with Longus's text through the translation of the first-generation Symbolist Russian poet Dmitriy Merezhkovsky (1865 – 1941). Merezhkovsky at the preface of his translation expressed the belief that Longus's story became the prototype of the theme of rustic love, and he further on identified in the plot:

a nuance, a first suggestion, a first gleam of that peculiar morning-twilight duality that is especially endemic and precious to us, the contemporaries of the common European Symbolist movement, which some call a decline (*Décadence*) and others a Renaissance, but in which there is actually both of these things: decay and rebirth, the end of the old and beginning of the new

Merezhkovsky cited in Morrison, 2004: 53.

The references to *fin-de-siècle*, decadence and decay can be traced in Rigos's production in several instances, such as the sense of morning-twilight at the

beginning of the choreography (see p. 212-213), and the design of the venue. The atmosphere of decline and decay is intensified by the small crops at the edges of the paintings, at the two rear corners and the sides of the room, as if this luxurious mansion was “melting, and disintegrating” (Sarigiannis, 1995: 38). However, if these elements are seen under the light of a contemporary reading of an old story, connections between *fin-de-siècle* and millennium are possible.

On the other hand, Ravel envisioned ancient Greece through “the Greece of my [his] dreams, which is similar to that imagined and painted by French artists at the end of the eighteenth century” (cited in Morrison, 2004 [online]: 56). The treatment of Greekness in Fokine and Ravel’s ballet involves “a geographic and temporal distancing: an exotic faraway land of sun and sex on the very edge of Europe in a bygone age” (Mawer, 2006: 93). Rigos is inverting the perspective, situating the plot in a Western context, more in tune with Fokine’s and Ravel’s era, and the *fin-de-siècle* aesthetics, evident in the scenic designs of the production (see p. 204). In so doing, he pursues a reflective strategy on the very conception of Greekness in artistic terms. That is, by taking as focus a ballet which brings together the stereotypes of the Greek (exotic) and the European (through ballet’s conventions), he rejects the exotic as something existing outside Europe and accepts it as part of European history.

Instead of representing an archaic past (like Longus), or a balletic image of Arcadia (like Fokine), Rigos re-contextualised the narrative within a European setting of the late 19th century. Rather than suggesting an idealised antiquity he proposed a reference to (European) social formality, upper-class manners and

etiquette and their transgression by sexuality and eroticism. Instead of the rural landscape of Longus's story or its theatrical representation in Fokine's ballet, Rigos located his work within the indoor location of a mansion, which stresses even more the tension between constructed notions of nature and culture (and the artificiality of both), vividly exposed by the decorated walls with paintings representing bucolic scenes (see p. 204). The work thus locates the viewer within a play of opposites, within a conscious shifting of perception between different layers of meaning.

Musicologist Simon Morrison exemplifies how the idea of a text being not the thing itself but a copy, as for example Longus's novel was not Hellenic but Hellenistic, is evident both in Fokine's libretto for his ballet (as for example in the scene of re-enacting the love story of Pan) and in Ravel's music (as in his use of chorus) (Morrison, 2004 [online]: 54-59). In other words, what Longus's text, Fokine's libretto and Ravel's music share is the strategy of depicting something without being the thing itself.

Rigos followed the same strategy but furthermore, his practice resonates with the approach expressed by sociologist Constantinos Tsoukalas on Greek national identity and European modernity. For Tsoukalas the notion of national identity entered Greece from Europe within the ideological framework brought about by the Enlightenment. This framework was itself founded to a great degree on ideas traceable back to classical antiquity. According to his argument:

this symbolic over-appreciation of the eternal Greece is by no means due to a continuously evolving indigenous interpretation of the past,

on the contrary, the Greek myth was almost entirely the product of Western European modernity.

Tsoukalas, 1999: 8

In other words, Tsoukalas suggests that the Greek nation state has incorporated the idea which was constructed by the Europeans for Greece, and thus a mechanism of seeing themselves through the eyes of the Europeans was established. Rigos seems to follow the same line of thought, however, he removed from his choreography any reference to ancient Greek iconography, or movement elements, such as two-dimensional body shapes, angular movements, usually associated with ancient Greece. He thus approached the theme of ancient Greece as a ghost which remains absent from stage and exists only in the minds of the spectators

This re-negotiation of visions of Greek past is further complicated if considering the text by Longus. A re-appreciation of the Greco-Roman novel has been evident during recent decades, on the premise that this genre embodies a spirit similar to current times, in other words, a prosaic world, politically and ethically complex, pluralist and hierarchical, and driven by global homogenisation (Whitmarsh, 2008, [online]: 1). As a consequence, this perspective reveals hidden or undervalued, by now, meanings pointing to common issues in both historical periods (Greco-Roman and our own). For example, ancient novels examined from a thematic point of view, show a remarkable convergence on some central issues of recent critical theory, particularly sexual and ethnic identity.

It is not by chance that Michel Foucault gave a prominent position to the Greek erotic novel in his third volume of the History of Sexuality (cited in Fussilo, 2008 [online]: 323). Foucault detected a series of shifts during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, away from pederasty of the ancient world, and towards heterosexual marriage, away from civic virtues and towards private ideas of self-reflection and care of the self, which can, also, be seen in contemporary societies.

Rigos's reading of Longus's story is based on heterosexual relationships, bringing to the fore the brutality that they might entail, and in this sense questioning their social neutrality. As dance critic Natasha Hassiotis argued, there are some issues which Rigos constantly explores:

Love, the limits of tolerance, the exploration of behaviours as 'good' or 'bad' and their evaluation as an insistence on the freedom of choice within a social context. Those issues are not represented as a 'manifesto', but they are dispersed within the works, with an ironic tone and provocative images (nudity, allusions to sadomasochistic eroticism).

Hassiotis cited in Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004: 419

For Rigos, then, the sexual underpinnings of Longus's tale were of particular interest in his own artistic exploration, and provided him with inspiration to approach the narrative in a way different than Fokine and Ravel, who eliminated those meanings. Contemporary criticism identified in Longus's text the polarity between nature and culture, the gradual discovery of sexuality, the fascination for rural life combined with a latent voyeurism (Fussilo, 2008 [online]: 325), issues and ideas espoused by Rigos's choreography, as my viewing suggests.

Regarding the potential shock-value of the performance, another dance critic Mirka Dimitriadi-Psaropoulou argued that:

Rigos in his new work ... used the same successful recipe as in last year's production of Stravinsky's *Les Noces*. That is, a well-known ballet from Diaghilev's Ballets Russes and nudity (more nudity this time). The result is even more success.

Dimitriadi-Psaropoulou, 1995a: 40

Dimitriadi-Psaropoulou suggested a link between nudity and success, between (naked) bodies and cultural consumption, which is a powerful practice of advertising and consumerism in contemporary societies.

Philosopher Francis Sparshott explores nudity and dance in one of the few academic texts examining this issue (1995 [online]: 303–310). He suggested that the obviously distinctive thing about complete nudity, including exposure of the genitals, is that throughout the existence of Western civilisation it has been surrounded by social inhibitions and prohibitions. For that reason, a naked person in public spaces can be assumed to have stepped outside of the social order.

In dance, as a theatre art, however, there is a set of theatrical conventions, which differentiates theatrical conditions from real life. However, as Sparshott argued, the spectator has to confront the uneasiness of how to react or behave, on the promise of an explanation of the dancers' nudity. However, a particularly problematic point about nudity in dance, according to Sparshott, is that "dance as controlled movement has to contend with the fact that some parts of the body are not fully subject to muscular control but respond rather to gravity and inertia ... [like] the head hair (if unshorn), the female bosom, the male genitals" (Sparshott, [online]: 1995, 304–306). Dancer, Giannis Giaples, remembered, "I felt

uncomfortable jumping up and down” (Giaples, 2008, [non-print]), while Elena Topalidou said that “I do not remember feeling uncomfortable being naked. I truly believed that Rigos was right to want us naked” (Topalidou, 2010 [non-print]).

For dance scholar Suzanne Jaeger possible reasons for a choreographer to present dancers undressed are the intentions of creating a sense of shock or surprise, a play with exhibitionism, or an artistic choice in the contribution nudity can offer to the meaning of the work (2009 [online]: 32–54). A combination of all these reasons might apply to *Daphnis and Chloe*. Nudity was also used in Rigos’s previous work *Les Noces*, as well as in performances of Edafos Company (see p. 243). The reasons for the strong controversy around *Daphnis and Chloe* might be the duration of the nude scene in *Daphnis and Chloe* which lasts for about five minutes in contrast to a few moments in the other choreographies. A second issue could be the proximity of the performance space and the audience, which maximized the impact of the materiality of the flesh and the details of the nude bodies in the eyes of the spectators. Finally, the meaning and possible interpretations of the nude scene within the work, stresses the issue of sexual fantasy or erotic awakening of Daphnis, as it is in the libretto, but goes beyond that, suggesting sadomadochistic associations (see p. 216).

Art scholars Kenneth Clark (1960) and John Berger (1972), in their analysis of visual representations of human form, made the distinction between nudity and nakedness (cited in Jaeger, 2009 [online]: 36). Nakedness, then, refers to someone without clothes, whereas the nude is an artistic representation of nakedness, the crucial difference being that the appearance of a naked person reveals his own

intentions, while the nude serves the fantasies of the observer (Jaeger, 2009 [online]: 36–37). Insofar as naked bodies are important to the meanings evoked in the dance as a work of art, the dancers are objectified. Their bodies become objects invested with meanings relative to the performance. At the same time, dancers are also subject to the fantasies and interpretations of the audience as well as to the will of the choreographer (Jaeger, 2009 [online]).

Hence, the possible discomfort of the audience in *Daphnis and Chloe* was the lack of correspondence between choreographed movement and (expected) expression in the nude scene, that is, a problem of meaning within the narrative of choreography, which exposed that mechanism of subjection referred by Jaeger. For, the scene was choreographed as if movement was ‘imposed’ on the dancers. While in previous scenes movement and thematic deployment had a logical connection, in this scene the dancers did not express anything obvious while they faced the audience directly. They perform their sexualities for themselves and for the audience. As a consequence, there is a split between their role and their exposed bodies.

Hassiotis described the scene “as a demonic dance, with a strong erotic character, which was not directed toward an aim, a person or a goal” (Hassiotis, 1995a: 30) and for that reason, seemed illogical. This lack of reason pushed the bodies to reject normative conditions of viewing and to challenge the spectators’ expectations, which can be interpreted either as part of Oktana’s innovative dance practice or as ‘shock value’. Despite that the use of nudity in *Daphnis and Chloe* played with the audience’s level of conservatism, the choreography did not

subvert traditional gender roles (see the end of the first *Daphnis – Chloe* duet or the rape scene), which brought a balance between provocation and normative viewing. The choreographer has continued until today to use nudity frequently in his works.

I am very interested in the naked body as a structure, as an abstraction, the way it becomes provocative, its sexuality, all that ... I have no intention to scandalize and shock when I show a naked body on stage ... The naked body gives me the opportunity to exaggerate and make extreme something which would be, otherwise, too real.

Rigos cited in Hassiotis, 2002

The representation of the naked dancer's body can be seen as part of a mutually constitutive mechanism, which reinforces the fascination and fear of the naked body for the spectator, while at the same time contributes to a promotion of this image, which fuels the economy of desire. The nudity and 'obscenity' were, and still are, part of a deliberate provocation by Rigos, who rejected the conventions of the dance past, and hence linked to the idea of the modern through this rejection.

5.6. Conclusion

Oktana Dancetheatre, with *Daphnis and Chloe*, responded to issues of modernisation and the demand for the new by appropriating international dance practices and history, and contributed to create a new identity for dance foregrounding two different perspectives on how contemporary dance in Greece could be: one perspective was based on a vision of contemporary culture as streaming from a creative interpretation of national heritage (the Ministry's rationale, the media's interpretations), while the other perspective (Rigos's aims)

was to shift the focus to a European or international dance heritage and a context of dance, within which an artist can be placed regardless of his/her national origins.

The choreography created a play of referents and layers of meanings, which foregrounded the complexity of subject formation and presented a battleground of bodies and ideas on Greece, nature and culture, civilisation and order. The work negotiated issues of history and heritage suggesting an ironic mood, which played with the boundaries between provocation and conformity and anticipated the proliferation of dancing bodies popularised by the media.

For Rigos, reworking a Greek theme through new movement and a re-reading of the subject matter, foregrounded his appropriation of the international practice of reworking and redefined his own artistic identity and positioning in the local dance field. In addition, the work commented on the relation between heritage and contemporary creation, as well as offering a critique to an exclusively Greek-centred perspective on Greek antiquity.

The choreography provoked critical ambivalence and public debate on issues of morality in dance, based on the particular use of nudity on stage, and posed questions on the relationship between provocation, market promotion and artistic value. On the other hand, the retaining of conventional gender roles enabled the audience to experience those moments that were unconventional (such as the nude scene) in a safe way, and to counterbalance those moments that could be seen to be subversive by part of the audience.

CHAPTER 6

ENVISAGING GAY IDENTITIES AND UNVEILING THE POWER OF BODIES: *ENOS LEPTOY SIGI* [ONE MOMENT OF SILENCE] BY EDAFOS COMPANY

6.1. Introduction

The space of untold desire is not always silent.
Vounelaki, 1997a: 198

Edafos Company is considered to be one of the main companies associated with the burgeoning of dance during the 1990s and the increase in dance audiences, the effects of which are still felt today (Koustas, 2007: 118; Hassiotis, 1997 [online]; Fessa, 2004: 64; Adamopoulou, 1997 [online]). Dimitris Papaioannou, a graduate of the School of Fine Arts and Angeliki Stellatou, a graduate of the State School of Dance, founded the company in 1986. Edafos Company was disbanded in 2002, having produced a total of 17 works (see Appendix 6) and having presented 340 performances during its 16-year existence (Papaioannou, 2008 [online]). Edafos Company managed to create, early on, a reputation for presenting aesthetically distinctive works characterised by striking visual imagery and profound emotional impact on the audience (Michalitsianou, 1991; Rikakis, 1991a, 1991b, 1992; Kalamaras, 1991; Sarigiannis, 1992; Varopoulou, 1991), expressed also in the public awards the company received.¹

Dimitris Papaioannou also directed and choreographed the opening and closing ceremonies for the Athens Olympic Games in 2004, a global event which gave

¹ The newly initiated State Choreography Award for *Midia* [Medea] (1994) and also for *Anthropini Dipsa* [Human Thirst] (1999) and *Gia Panda* [For Ever] (2001). The production of *Midia* [Medea] is considered to be the performance which prompted the Minister of Culture to initiate the award in the first place (Mikroutsikos, 2010 [non-print]).

him an international reputation. After the Olympic Games, he continued choreographing for his new company named 2. Angeliki Stellatou continued working as a choreographer for theatre productions and she also founded her own dance company, named Ypsilon, in 2007.

In this chapter, the examination of *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] approaches dance as a form of cultural practice and knowledge that both reflects and generates meanings regarding gay identities and proposes an intermediate space in which performers and audience can experience a destabilisation of the notion of unified subject. This instability of the notion of the subject is seen as resembling the fear of the social body about penetration by diseases such as AIDS, and it is captured in the work through a variety of means (aural, visual) aiming to provoke a sensual affect similar to Baroque art.

The symbolic fear of penetration by AIDS was generated in Greek society at a moment when the homosexual movement in Greece was in a state of crisis, as a result of internal conflicts.² The fear was reinforced by the marked increase in the number of AIDS victims between 1985 and 1995³ and the media publicity surrounding the exploitation of gay issues by the media. The death of the famous art collector Alexandros Iolas and the fashion designer Billy Bo a few years

² AKOE, the 'Apeleftherotiko Kinima Omofilofilon Elladas' [Liberation Movement of Greek Homosexuals] was founded in October 1976 and remained active until 1989, when it was dissolved due to competing factions within the movement. In 1988, EOK, the 'Hellenic Homosexual Community' [Elliniki Omofilofiliki Koinotita] was founded, which pursued an integrationist approach to gay politics and embraced lesbian issues in its manifesto. Despite the existence of an orchestrated social movement for homosexuals, this kind of social politics had relatively limited power in public sphere.

³ Official records on AIDS epidemic in Greece indicate an increase during the ten-year period 1985–1995 from 0.7% (14 patients) in 1985 to 20% (206 patients) in 1995. In 1996, the records indicated the highest percentage (24.3% or 236 patients), while numbers started to decline in the following years (Karakostaki, 2010: 142).

earlier (1987) than the production of *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] (1995), increased public awareness (and fear) about AIDS and also contributed to the labeling of AIDS as a “gay disease” (Dendrinou, 2008 [online]: 155). In addition, even though the number of AIDS and HIV victims was relatively small compared to other countries, the epidemic played a crucial role in changing the character of discourses on sexuality and sexual rights. After a period of social debates on gender rights and reforms of heterosexual family rights (legislation on marriage, divorce, abortion), in the early 1990s the focus shifted to discourses on health and control of sexual behaviour (Karakostaki, 2010: 141).

The body in the late 20th century became a symbol of crisis, as it was vulnerable to HIV, AIDS and death, which are seen, in military terms, to invade it, threatening to pollute society at large (Sontag, 1989). Illness and death shifted from the clinical and private sphere (Ariès cited in Hutcheon & Hutcheon, 2004, 5) to social discourse and a public symbolism of fear. The rhetoric of seeing AIDS as punishment for ‘unnatural’ sexual behavior, and of social deviation, resembles the politics of anxiety associated with the *fin de siècle* (Turner, 1991: 24), which found its symbolism in the female body (Buci-Glucksmann, 1984: 97–105). In a similar way, the late twentieth century might find its symbolism in ‘toxic bodies’, that is, bodies threatened by global flows of epidemics, contaminated food products, environmental disasters or emigration flows (Seremetakis, 2001 [online]: 115–129). Simultaneously, these same bodies are also capable of being open, fluid and unstable, a fact which opens a dialogue for redefining subjectivity, and especially gendered subjectivity.

On the other hand, the modernising process of Greek society brought new social representations of male identities. Lifestyle and men's magazines, such as Playboy (published since 1985) or Status (published since 1988) have contributed to constructing new representations of male identities. They subverted the normative figures of the 'male as [social] fighter' and the stereotypical image of man as the 'bread winner' of the family. Instead, they constructed a male identity which acknowledged men's (heterosexual) sexuality, his interest in fitness and appearance, and his emotional as well as rational nature (Zestanakis, 2010: 30-32). Nevertheless, ethnographers of Greece, such as Faubion (1993), Loizos and Papataxiarchis (1991), have argued that gender norms are strict and that non-conformity to gender expectations in Greece can have serious social consequences for the individual.

The spirit of anti-conformism and social reform, related to the changes brought about by the modernisation process in Greek society (Sofos, 2000 [1994]: 154; Sevastakis, 2004: 99–116), was publicly contested: the social, cultural and political processes associated with modernisation involved tensions and contradictions in terms of social attitudes or mentalities (see pp. 108 -112). One such issue is the transformation of socio-cultural attitudes in accepting the voice of the socially marginalised, such as gay men and women. Their voices were, however, in danger of being ridiculed and persecuted⁴ by the dominant culture through the media, whose role was rather controversial.⁵

⁴ An indication of such practices is the public confrontation of Manos Hadjidakis with newspaper *Avriani*, which reached its peak in September 1987. The newspaper, strong supporter of PASOK government, initiated a provocative assault against the composer based on his sexual orientation, which provoked a fierce response from Hadjidakis.

⁵ Such is the case of popular TV comedies like *Aparadextoi* [*Unacceptable*] (which started broadcasting in 1991) and *Deka Mikroi Mitsoi* [*Ten Little Mitsoi*] (which started broadcasting in

Within this set of discourses and social conditions, Edafos Company explored gay identity by activating an existing, but silent, cultural heritage of homosexual art. The contribution of the composer Manos Hadjidakis (1925–1994),⁶ the poets Demetrios Capetanakis (1912–1944),⁷ Dinos Christianopoulos (b. 1931)⁸ and Yorgos Chronas (b. 1948),⁹ as well as the clear references to Papaioannou’s mentor, painter Yannis Tsarouchis,¹⁰ infused the creation of *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] with traces of that heritage. In *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*], Papaioannou uses the history of art as a marker of theatrical representation. Through his recycling of visual material from his teacher Tsarouchis, he approaches the notion of tradition by using images that clearly

1992). In these weekly comic series, a series of human characters were presented, among them male homosexuals. On one hand, they presented a superficial and stereotypical portrayal of gays, in order to provoke laughter; on the other hand, these series helped familiarise a great number of families with the notion of gayness and overcome extreme social attitudes towards gayness, by using subtle social critique and humour.

⁶ Manos Hadjidakis (1925–94) is one of the best-known composers of the second half of the 20th century in Greece. Hadjidakis attracted notoriety in February 1949 by drawing attention in a lecture to *rebetiko* (urban folksong), a genre previously scorned by serious Greek musicians. Hadjidakis composed music for theatre and cinema, such as the film scores for *Never on Sunday* (1960), *Sweet Movie* (1974) and *Topkapi* (1963). He had also collaborated with choreographers Zouzou Nikoloudi for the production of *The Birds* for the Theatro Technis [Art Theatre] of Karolos Koun (1962) and with Hellenic Choreodrama of Rallou Manou (see p. 12 footnote 8 and pp. 73–74). He showed a specific Greek sensibility in composing music for poetry by George Seferis, Odysseas Elytis and Nikos Gatsos, which led to a revival of Greek popular song. Later, he moved away from *rebetiko* and music for dance towards songs and song cycles in a recognisable idiom, with subtle orchestration which creates a poetic universe imbued with sadness or nostalgia (Leotsakos and Dalianoudi, no date [online sources]).

⁷ Demetrios Capetanakis (1912–1944) was a Greek poet who died young from leukemia in London. He wrote poems and philosophical texts in Greek, but his main oeuvre was written in English during his years in London. He came into contact with poets such as William Plomer, and John Lehmann, and he undertook translations of Modern Greek poetry for *Penguin New Writing* edited by Lehmann.

⁸ Dinos Christianopoulos (Konstantinos Dimitriadis, b. Thessaloniki, 1931) is a poet, scholar and literary critic. In 1958, he founded the literary journal *Diagonios* [*Diagonal*], which he continued publishing until 1983. The journal acted as a platform for contemporary poets and writers from Thessaloniki. He made his first appearance on the literary scene in 1949 and since then he has published numerous poetry collections. His poetry focuses on the experience of (homosexual) love alongside the everyday experience of daily life, evident in the plain language he uses.

⁹ Yorgos Chronas (b. 1948) is a well-respected poet, journalist and author. Since 1983 he has been the editor of the literary journal *Odos Panos* [*Pan’s Street*].

¹⁰ Yannis Tsarouchis (1910–1989) was one of the leading artists of the artistic and intellectual movement of ‘the ‘30s generation’. He also collaborated with Manou and Pratsika on their dance productions and is one of the best-known painters in Greece.

refer to it and, at the same time, exposes the male body in similar ways. Tsarouchis' main theme, the male nude, had specific characteristics: it was "young, of lower-class origin, and with eminent male characteristics" (Vakalo, 1983: 76), like strong muscles and toughness. Papaioannou, without using nudity, replicated this aesthetic, trying to create a symbolic space for homoerotic desire in his own historical moment.¹¹

As the analysis in this chapter argues, Edafos Company explored this homosexual tradition as a repository for suggesting multiple and fluid notions of gay identity which corresponded to contemporary discourses and theories of the constructed nature of homosexuality. At the same time, the choreography of bodies animated a suppressed gay sensibility which was present in other cultural (other arts, club culture) and social forms (homosexual social movements, gay public spaces). The analysis of *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] explores male gay identities as a play of surfaces instead of a psychological core. The play is manifested in *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] through the use of multiple means (text, music, song, dance and visual imagery) which create a multisensory experience for the audience.

The huge scenic environment and the depiction of catastrophe through the falling bodies in the first part and the references to Caravaggio, the use of light for creating tension and foregrounding the materiality of the flesh in the second part of the performance, recall Baroque tropes, in their sensual effect and affect, and

¹¹ Papaioannou's recent works re-approach issues of male identity, relationships between bodies and vast space, and experiment with the ways an audience can be engaged.

theatricality and mobilisation of the notions of ambivalence and difference (Turner, 1991: 22). *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] used the exposure of male bodies on stage as its major performance trope, and by its use of devices, such as exchange of gaze or dancing positions, pointed to the creation of a space for homosexual desire.

Staging for the first time in Greece a dance production on the theme of AIDS, Edafos Company brought dance, sexual politics and social issues to the fore, albeit in an ambiguous way. Instead of a straightforward social critique or an outward expression of personal feelings, Papaioannou created an in-between space for alternative, fluid identities. This is captured in a multisensory experience which also had the capacity to shift the spectator's viewpoint and sense of subjecthood. At the same time, the hierarchy of dance funding, the media's populist ideologies and the expectation of appealing to a wider audience, complete a web of tensions within which the particular work is examined in this chapter.

6.2. Edafos Company and its shifting positions

Edafos Company's early years reveal a series of shifts and changes of the company's position within the dance field, of its members' movement knowledge and aesthetic, and in its material resources, which set the background of the production of *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*]. These shifts are examined in this analysis as traces of the tensions between artistic exploration, the institutional framework, the socio-cultural and personal history and actions of the choreographer as agent, all infused in the production of the work. The company's

works and artistic practice and its reception by critics, media and public turned a company of young artists whose work had “[artistic] virtues which surpass a creation by young artists” (Vounelaki, 1989a: 8) into the most prestigious and well-known dance company. By 1995, Edafos Company was the best funded dance company by the State funding system. Its previous production *Midia* [*Medea*] proved to be the most recognisable and most toured (nationally and internationally) dance work of the 1990s, and its audience has increased to a degree unexpected and unprecedented for a Greek dance company.

Dimitris Papaioannou and Angeliki Stellatou met in the early 1980s, when they both performed for the dance company Analia, founded by Mary Tsouti where they were introduced to Erick Hawkins’ technique (for Mary Tsouti, see p. 209, footnote 13). During the period 1985 to 1986, Papaioannou travelled to New York, where he was introduced to Japanese butoh, and in 1989 he worked in Berlin as an apprentice to Robert Wilson in his production of *Orlando*, an experience, which Papaioannou describes as life changing (Papaioannou, 2010 [non-print]). At the same time (1987–1990, with interruptions), Stellatou, supported financially by a grant from the Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, travelled to New York. She enrolled at the Merce Cunningham Studio but also came into contact with release techniques, studying with Jeremy Nelson and Sara Rudner among others.

In 1986, Papaioannou and Stellatou began a period of intense exploration within Edafos Company, as they both felt that existing dance companies could not satisfy their needs. Their aim was to dance in a way that “could talk to our hearts in an

aesthetic form in accordance with our contemporary life” (Papaioannou cited in Hatzopoulos, 1998 [non-print]). Stellatou suggested that the goal of their experimentation was “a whole way of moving that has to do with the sensation of the body from the inside out” (Stellatou cited in Pnevmatikou, 2005: 20), which is not dance in terms of technical movements but “a theatrical praxis which uses movement” (Papaioannou cited in Vounelaki, 1989a: 10). In this exploration, Papaioannou had the vision of the choreography while Stellatou was the invaluable partner who inspired him with her personality and movement sensibility (Papaioannou cited in Vounelaki, 1989a: 10).

As both Papaioannou and Stellatou performed in their early works, the transformation of their dance knowledge contributed to their movement exploration. Stellatou pointed out that in Tsoutis’s company they came into contact with Erick Hawkins’s technique, which was “tenderer to the body, than the techniques I was taught in the dance school. We didn’t have to push ourselves for a technical accomplishment, to push our bodies harder. It had to do with a quality of movement and not its quantity” (Stellatou, 2010 [non-print]). However, she argued that it was the release technique classes in New York that shifted her perception of movement, from a general sense of moving to a clear and accurate perception as a result of the focus on the mechanics of movement (Stellatou, 2010 [non-print]).

Papaioannou, on the other hand, was introduced to butoh, which shaped his aesthetics of the body in motion, especially in the manipulation of the body’s energy (Papaioannou, 2010 [non-print]). As a result of those movement

experiences, Papaioannou and Stellatou focused on minute details in movement and in the distribution of energy in and out of the body. For example, in their first production *To Vouno* [*The Mountain*] (1987), the exploration was focused on the moments of shifting from one condition to another:

The work was a study of how our two bodies could morph into various animal forms, and of how the transitions between these forms could be done in a smart and smooth way. Such transitions from one image to another were to become one of my major concerns as a choreographer.

Papaioannou, 2008 [online]

These early works often exposed on stage a raw energy, repetitive structure and an idiosyncratic language characterised by elimination. For example, in *Domatio I* [*Room I*] (1988), in a setting consisting only of a bed and a table, three men perform actions like walking, undressing, sitting and lying in a repetitive, aggressive manner.

A punk atmosphere...No music but some outbursts of sound sampled from tracks by The Birthday Party (Nick Cave's first group)... Repetitive, weird and violent movements...Military boots are used extensively as a reference to the punk scene, and Greek gay iconography (as expressed by the painter Yannis Tsarouchis and the poet Dinos Christianopoulos).

Papaioannou, (2008) [online]

After Papaioannou's experience of Robert Wilson's theatre in 1990, his exploration focused more on poetic images, visual transformation through the use of slow movement, and the interconnection of movement and sound/music, evident in the productions *Ta Tragoudia* [*The Songs*] (1991) and *Ta Feggaria* [*The Moons*] (1992), which were crucial for the company's development and reputation.¹² In these works, Papaioannou refined his visual perspective and

¹² Both productions were presented in an old building in the centre of Athens, the Katalypsi. The students of the School of Art occupied the building and transformed it into an artistic laboratory.

presented an extremely elaborate movement-light image in comparison with previous works, which was described as “visual poetry” (Kaggelary, 1991) and “extreme beauty” (Rikakis, 1991b).

At the same time, Papaioannou was active within the alternative visual culture as a comic artist for the underground magazine Kontrol sto chaos [Kontrol in chaos] and other comic magazines, like Vavel [Babylon] and Para Pende [To Five]. He also worked as a designer for the industrial clubs *Ergostasio* [*Factory*], *Aerodromio* [*Airport*] and *Atomo* [*Atom*]. This was a shift in the material resources supporting dance, as the previous generation of choreographers (Mandafounis, Metsis) had financially supported their art mainly through dance teaching activities. Papaioannou linked his dance work to resources other than dance and, due to the absence of dance students, his practice sustained its distinctive character as a form practiced within a limited group of company members. Nevertheless, Edafos Company was selected to represent Greece in European platforms supporting the creativity of young artists, a fact indicating its critical acclaim and the growing reputation of the company.¹³

Papaioannou’s personal background reveals a number of contradictory elements which he brings together in his works: a combination of high art and pop culture, an eclectic and refined aesthetic with pop and raw-edged material, and a romantic melancholy with an ironic overtone (Vounelaki, 1997b: 7–11). Coming from a

Katalypsi was part of an alternative student and social movement, active in the 1980s, and an expression of radical artistic self-support schemes.

¹³ As a comic designer Papaioannou won the 1st award at the Biennale for Young Artists in Marseille (1990). As a choreographer, his works *To Vouno*, *To Adiavroho* [*The Mountain, The Raincoat*] represented contemporary Greek dance at the Biennale for Young Artists in Barcelona (1987) and his choreographies *Domatio I & Domatio II* [*Room I & Room II*] were presented in the Biennale for Young Artists in Bologna (1988).

lower-middle class family, he was encouraged by his mother to apply for a scholarship to the most respected private school in Athens, Athens College. Due to his schooling, he developed the best possible social and educational credentials, which contrasted greatly with the underground personal life he pursued after his adolescence, and the marginal social position he assumed as a gay man (Papaioannou, 2010 [non-print]).

During his adolescence, he met the painter Gianni Tsarouhis and became his student, before entering the School of Fine Arts in Athens. He left home to live alone in Exarheia (the centre of underground culture of Athens in the 1980s), and took part in the gay underground culture of the city. In a TV interview, he stressed how his attitude towards visual arts and especially painting was informed by his class status, and offered this as one reason for his interest in comics: “Painting could not offer me a contemporary means of expression. Poor and young people, like me, seldom could come in contact with such art. Comics then, were something else” (Papaioannou cited in Tsiligianni, 2002 [non-print]). He seems to have considered himself as part of a greater social group of young people, a fact which fuelled his artistic interests, as he explored ways to connect his artistic expression with the need to communicate to an audience.

The visual style of comics with their condensed form of expression and their non-elitist aesthetic set the principle of Edafos Company’s performance idiom and the manner of its communication with its audience, especially in narrative works. The visual aspects of Papaioannou’s works were intensified by the use of slow movement, repetition and a manipulation of timing, inherited from his butoh

experience. Using such frames of reference for his art, Papaioannou's work contrasted with the dance tradition of the Greek past but also with that of other artists of his generation. For Papaioannou, what was interesting on stage was the "coexistence of image, music, movement for a theatrical praxis, aiming at transferring intensity [to the audience] and proposing an ethical dimension to art: that is, the distance art should have from entertainment" (Papaioannou cited in Hatzopoulos, 1998 [non-print]).

Slowness, long duration and repetition all have an ethical dimension, according to Papaioannou, for they resist consumption (recalling Lepecki's argument, see p. 149). This kind of manipulation of time on stage provides perceptual space for the audience and resists the logic of spectacle. On the contrary, the performance opens a space for dancers' "bodies to sleepwalk" (Papaioannou, 2010 [non-print]), while creating poetic and stimulating images which register with the viewer.

Movement exploration was based on the conception of the body's form in space, paying particular attention to the empty spaces created by the different body parts. These bodily forms had to be filled with energy by the performer, to become what Papaioannou called a "condenser of energy" (Papaioannou, 2010 [non-print]). The tension of the inner flow of energy in relation to its 'negative' other – the empty space – creates a tension between the inside and the outside of the body's form, between closed and open body shapes. For the performers, it was a challenge to "fill a pose with energy and make an image moving in space. This was a procedure which did not involve slowness *in* time, but a slowness *of* time" (Giaples, 2008 [non-print], emphasis in the original). It was not a movement

performed in slow motion but a conscious manipulation of the body's energy to unfold in time slowly and continuously. The result was a sense of movement as liquid (Giaples, 2008 [non-print]). This was a complicated and intriguing process for dancers trained in ballet and modern dance techniques (such as Graham and Limon) as was the case with the majority of company's dancers.

For Papaioannou, the strategy of manipulating the inner time and energy of movement was also related to the notion of revelation, which involves the spectator. Papaioannou defined revelation as "the dimension [of consciousness] in which the spectator can enter if attendance at a performance manages to change his/her own fast rhythms" and he names this experiential condition "hedonistic endurance" (Papaioannou, 2011 [online]). This is the ideal performance situation for Papaioannou, and as long as the ideal spectator allows him/herself to be affected by the performance, the encounter might encompass the political potential of dance, as an artistic experience which can provoke reflection in the audience's mind.

Edafos Company's work was described as a theatrical experience of "a hybrid form in which movement and light created visual spectacles" (Vounelaki, 1996b: 10). Within this visual spectacle, according to theatre scholar and critic Deo Kaggelari: "the movement of bodies in space and their relationship to space and time convey an authentic dramaturgy, while the minimal gestures deliver optimum energy and emotion" (Kaggelari, 1991: 49). Edafos Company was conceived as a company whose works had an economy of means, and combined

movements, gestures and actions, all meticulously structured, without becoming mere form but also expressing and communicating feelings and emotions.

This combination of visual, formal and expressive elements is better exemplified in the way Papaioannou used images to convey meaning or to deploy a narrative on stage. “I have no other way of communicating a theme than through a combination of human feelings and images” (Papaioannou cited in Hassiotis, 1997 [online]). For some critics, this approach to choreography overshadowed movement exploration and movement composition in favour of visual elements (Hatziantoniou, 1998: 32-33; Kouroupi: 1996: 316–318) and divided audience and critics (Hassiotis, 1997 [online]).

Finally, movement and bodily form in space were always explored in relation to the whole stage environment. It was not unusual for Edafos Company to build the whole stage, scenery and props prior to the development of the choreography,¹⁴ which was conceived and created in relation to the design of that particular space and to the particular props (chairs, water, costumes). “What we had to offer was a way of moving [together] with the costume, [together] with the props” argued the choreographer (Papaioannou cited in Hatzopoulos, 1998 [non-print]). In particular for *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*], the stairs in the first part, and the chairs, table and glasses in the second part, were props in relation to which the dancers had to explore movement possibilities by using their “kinesthetic imagination” (Reynolds, 2007: 1), starting from given images, such as using the chair as crutch (Papanikolaou, 1999 [non-print]; Giaples, 2008 [non-print]).

¹⁴ In the early days of the company, these elements were constructed by the company members themselves.

This process involved a conception of movement as “not consisting of positions, or pauses but of energy directed outwards” (Giaples, 2008 [non-print]). It required a re-training of the dancers, which respected, however, their personality and individual abilities (Dragonas, 2010 [non-print]). Hence, this fruitful working environment helped to form a company of dedicated members who strongly believed in the company’s philosophy (Dragonas, 2010 [non-print]; Stellatou, 2010 [non-print]).¹⁵

A critical point in the company’s development was the production of *Midia* [*Medea*] (1993). This work was, and possibly still is, the best-known work of the company and it was performed in national and international contexts, more often than any other production by a Greek company.¹⁶ It was originally commissioned to represent Greece in Antwerp, the Cultural Capital of Europe in 1993, and embodied the new perspective of cultural policy to promote abroad Greece’s contemporary dance. This performance proved to be the occasion for the Minister of Culture, Thanos Mikroutsikos, to initiate the State Dance Award (Mikroutsikos, 2010 [non-print]) and to radically increase the company’s funding (see Appendix 2).

¹⁵ The company’s permanent core of performers during the 1990s were Dimitris Papaioannou, Aggeliki Stellatou, Stavros Zalmas (left in 1993), Vaggelis Papadadakis (left in 1993), Tina Papanikolaou (also Papaioannou’s assistant), Nikos Dragonas, Giannis Giaples and Fotis Nikolaou. In addition, there were also a number of artists often collaborating with the company, among them the composer Giorgos Koumendakis and the visual artist Nikos Alexiou.

¹⁶ *Midia* [*Medea*] acquired the status of a kind of ‘cultural ambassador’ since it was presented abroad within the context of national initiatives at international level (Greece in Britain in 1998, London, Homage to Greece in 1999, New York and the Cultural Year of Greece in China in 2008, Beijing), as well as in international dance festivals, such as the Biennale de la Danse de Lyon (1998) and 12th Istanbul International Theatre Festival (2000). *Medea* also toured extensively in Greece. With a completely new cast, major musical changes and choreographic adaptations, it was presented under the title *Medea2* for the Hellenic Festival in Athens (2008).

Papaioannou, commented on the significance of *Midia* [*Medea*] for the company, pointing out that “It signaled our transition from the alternative venue of Katalipsi with its 60 seats to the stage of National Theatre with 700 seats. There we performed five days, and it was sold out” (Papaioannou, no date [online]). Furthermore, he explained the popularity of the work, arguing that: “The work was emotionally accessible to everyone, but at the same time abstract. It was simple, elaborated and grandiose” (Papaioannou, no date [online]). American dance critic Anna Kisselgoff described *Midia* [*Medea*] as “a cinematic dream acted out by chalk-white dancer-mimes who move in slow motion when not erupting into emotional outbursts” (Kisselgoff, 1998 [online]).

Midia [*Medea*] draws on cinema and filmic techniques when narrating the story of Jason and Medea, and, hence, it captures not only the unfolding of a story, but also the sentimentality of a melodrama. Dancer Photis Nikolaou suggested that *Midia* [*Medea*] had an emotional overload that was quite unusual for dance at the time (Nikolaou, 2008 [non-print]). It had an interesting balance between mime, drama and aestheticism. In addition, “it was all set on the water, which played with symbolism and the senses” (Nikolaou, 2008 [non-print]). Hence, *Midia* [*Medea*] opened new positions for dance within the cultural field and it brought dance to large venues and attracted a wide audience. Finally, it connected the visual, sensorial and aural perceptions of the audience, producing a powerful combination.

All these elements were further employed in *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] but on a different scale. In terms of material conditions of production, the

increased financial support from the Ministry of Culture received as a result of *Midia* [*Medea*] made possible the creation of *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*]. In addition, *Midia* [*Medea*] created an unexpected visibility for Edafos Company and its work that, in turn, created very high expectations and raised questions about audience development and accessibility of dance work at this unprecedented scale.

6.3. *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*]: bringing together dance, arts and society

Edafos Company's creation *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] was premiered on 19 October 1995 at the Old Electricity Factory of New Faliro (a suburb of Athens). The performances continued until the end of October in the specially constructed space, which had a capacity of 450 spectators. Twelve male dancers, eight male athletes and three female dancers, among them the 78-year-old choreographer Zouzou Nikoloudi, performed the work.¹⁷

Enos Leptou Sigy [*One Moment of Silence*] was dedicated to Papaioannou's friend, Alexis Bistikas,¹⁸ a film director who died from AIDS in 1995. The ninety-

¹⁷ The credits include: Soprano Tzeni Drivala/Mata Katsouli, Men: Christos Aleferis, Giannis Giaples, Giannis Diamandopoulos, Nikos Dragonas, Antonis Koutroumbis, Giorgos Kardakos, Grigoris Lagos, Aggelos Mendis, Giorgos Matskaris, Vassilis Mitsiou, Dimitris Bakalis, Fotis Nikolaou, Alexandros Niagos, Stephanos Nikolaidis, Michalis Papadopoulos, Dimitris Papaioannou, Tassos Papaioannou, Michalis Papandonakis, Thanassis Solomos, Dimitris Sotiriou. Mother: Tina Papanikolaou, Magdalena: Aggeliki Stellatou, Old mother: Zouzou Nikoloudi. Set-costumes: Lily Pezanou, lighting desing: Alekos Gianaros, assistant to choreographer: Tina Papanikolaou, assistant to set designer: Michalis Papandonakis, assistant to light designer: Linos Meindanis, Make-up: Aggelos Mendis.

Recorded Orchestra (1st part): Oslo Sinfonietta, Recorded Choir (1st part): Oslo Philharmonic Chamber Choir. Conducted by Stefan Sköld. Live piano (2nd part): Kostis Papadakis, Song (live): Andreas Karakotas, Doros Dimosthenous

¹⁸ Alexis Bistikas was born in Athens in 1964. He obtained a B.Sc. in Political Science from the London School of Economics in 1986 and a postgraduate diploma in Telecommunications from Goldsmith's College, University of London, in 1989. In 1993, he received an M.A. in film and television directing from the Royal College of Art. He made nine short films and one feature

minute work was divided into two parts; the first, under the title *Requiem gia to Telos tou Erotas* [*Requiem for the End of Love*], was set to specially commissioned music by Giorgos Koumendakis (b. 1959),¹⁹ and the second, *Ta Tragoudia tis Amartias* [*The Songs of Sin*] was set to music by Manos Hadjidakis.

The idea of the work came earlier in 1992, when composer Manos Hadjidakis, after attending the company's production of *Ta Feggaria* [*The Moons*] (1992), proposed that Papaioannou should choreograph his new composition. It was a compilation of twelve songs under the title *H Amartia einai Byzantini kai o Erotas Arxaios* [*The Sin is Byzantine and Love is Ancient*], based on twelve poems by Ntinios Christianopoulos and one by George Hronas. All poems referred to homoerotic feelings and the despair of loss and loneliness. Hadjidakis' death prevented him from orchestrating the work and, as a result, in the production the music was performed live in its original form for piano and voice. Giorgos Koumendakis' composition, *Requiem gia to Telos tou Erotas* [*Requiem for the End of Love*] was based on the poem *Lazaros* [*Lazarus*] by poet Demetrios Capetanakis, which describes death agony and despair (see pp. 272-273).

The extensive press previews and coverage reveal plenty of information about the prehistory of the work's production and its collaborators. Its programme also

length film. He died in 1995. Bistikas was a close friend of Papaioannou from their childhood and they co-founded the comic magazine *Kontrol sto Chaos* [*Kontrol at Chaos*] (1986–1992).

¹⁹ Giorgos Koumendakis (b. 1959) is one of the most important young Greek composers. After studying music in Athens, he followed courses at IRCAM in Paris (1979–80) and Xenakis' classes at the University of Paris (1980–81). In 1985, Ligeti commissioned his *Symmolpa V* for the European Community Youth Orchestra and in 1992 he won the Prix de Rome. He is one of the permanent collaborators of Edafos Dance, and he has composed music for a number of the company's works: *Sapfo* [*Sappho*] in 1992, *I Iphigenia sto yefyri tis Artas* [*Iphigenia on the Bridge of Arta*] in 1995, *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] in 1995, *Ta Paramythia ton Aderfon Grimm* [*Grimm's Tales*] in 1996, *Dracoulas* [*Dracula*] in 1997, *Kataigida* [*Storm*] in 1997 and the opening ceremony for the Athens Olympic Games in 2004 (Leotsakos, no date [online]).

contains texts by all the artists involved, Hadjidakis, Christianopoulos, Koumendakis and Papaioannou, as well as poems by Capetanakis and Christianopoulos. The texts are autobiographical, expressing each artist's relation to the other collaborators, and to the theme of love. A very personal tone is evident and prescribes a sense of tribute to lost friends. The work is situated firmly within a framework of poetic language and personal memory and the photographs provide a clear black-and-white preview of the work's atmosphere. The music composition by Koumendakis for *Requiem gia to Telos tou Erotas* [*Requiem for the End of Love*] with the live presence of the soprano and her incorporation in the choreography as the Figure of Death, pushed the limits of the first part towards an operatic form (see pp. 270 - 271).

'One moment of silence', when enacted in everyday life, is the way people pay tribute to someone or something that is absent. It is usually a public ceremonial expression of grief and honour in reaction to a loss. This pause in action and stillness in time produces an empty space which resonates with the absence of the person. During a minute of silence, memory and thoughts unfold in an esoteric narrative where images, words, feelings and past moments evolve within the people participating. On the other hand, as a commemorative event, it helps people to create a sense of belonging to a common group, to become part of an imagined community (Anderson, 1991 [1983]: 6-7). Depending on the occasion, and the commemorative context, this imagined community could change; it could be a national or ethnic community, or a political party or a social group.

In Edafos Company's production, the imagined community draws not only from the social repository of gay sexuality, but also from humanity at large, because loss is assumed to be a universal feeling. For the choreography, the title suggests a transformation of the moment of performance into a ceremony in which the audience and performers can participate. This was further enhanced by the architecture of the space, which was a double construction of stairs, each three metres high, facing one another (Papanikolaou, 2010 [non-print]); one was for the performers, the other was for the audience. In addition, the surrounding empty space of the factory engulfed both the stage construction and the people in its cold bowl, creating a shell removed from the outside world.

Within the history of contemporary dance in the country, *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] has been treated as a problematic work. For the choreographer, this creation was “the most personal work so far, the performance which expresses myself totally and it is the most important thing I have done” (Papaioannou in anon, 1995a: 5). For some critics, Edafos Company presented a work of “naïve meanings and overt descriptions” (Kaltaki, 1995), which focused on a “performance of pure images and beauty” (Kaggelari, 1995: 55).

Both Matina Kaltaki and Deo Kaggelari are important theatre critics who also write about dance. They both focus on the problems regarding the processes of signification in the choreography, accusing it of being superficial. Coming from a background other than dance, they seem to approach movement on the level of decoding its message, and examining dancing bodies through their potential to communicate with an audience. They both comment on the work negatively,

suggesting that the work failed to stir their emotions or seemed superficial in its exploration. They did not examine how this depiction of superficiality, rather than deep feelings, could provide other than the expected possibilities for the choreographer to express gay identity.

Dance critic Clementine Vounelaki wrote:

Edafos Dance's works have won our respect not only for their visual imagery and theatrical sculptures, which remind us of Tsarouhis or Caravaggio, but most importantly, for a sense of ritual. [A ritual] in which it invites us to delve through a brilliant combination of image, timing, energy and action...[However] changing the size of productions from small 'hand-made' pieces to large productions the choreographer's power to set the rhythm of the performance has been lost.

Vounelaki, 1995b: 34

For Vounelaki, Edafos Company's works created the conditions that permitted a meeting between spectators and performers in the performance situation. This meeting proposed for her a new kind of community and it resonated with the ritual origins of dance. For Vounelaki, this communion was lost in the transition from small-scale to large-scale production, and by the same token in the production of *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*].

The problem with large-scale productions, according to Vounelaki, was the danger of the creator "succumbing to the spectacular and abolishing body memory" (Vounelaki, 1995b: 34). Vounelaki did not provide evidence for how she felt *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] embraced the spectacular. However, her argument points to a general distrust of critics towards institutional pressures, expressed here in the large audience to whom the work was expected to appeal, affecting the choreographer's artistic decisions. This point will be

explored further later in the chapter (see pp. 264 - 274), after the analysis of my own viewing of the video of the work.

6.4 Viewing *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*]²⁰



Figure 5:
Enos Leptou Sigy [*One Moment of Silence*] by Edafos Company
Photo by Marilena Staphylidou

The choreography starts in semi-darkness with two male dancers slowly approaching one another. Their arms are extended forward, and one of them holds a knife. He imitates cutting himself, each holding the other's gaze as they approach one another. When they finally meet, they shake hands, cueing the music to start.

As the lights illuminate the stage, a female figure, the Figure of Death, dressed in black, becomes visible at the top of an enormous staircase. A male dancer is lying underneath her, and gradually begins to glide down the stairs, starting to fall.

²⁰ The viewing was based on a recording of the performance provided by the company without further details and for private use only.

Other bodies also appear, following the same trajectory. In different rhythms, a great number of bodies, slowly, one after the other, fall down the stairs, while the female figure starts to sing. The music and song have a strong religious and dramatic character, which, according to the composer “creates a clear form, based on the internal rhythm of a mourning march” (Koumendakis in Edafos Company (1995) [programme]), and expresses “an existential despair through harmonic restraint and a continuous melodic flow” (Leotsakos, no date [non-print]).

Performers, in unison, start to crawl upwards, only to slide down again as if melting. Repetition and the great number of people moving on the stairs create a visual rhythm which becomes the main motif of *Requiem gia to Telos tou Erotas* [*Requiem for the End of Love*]. As a continuous theme, this visual and psychological image of falling runs throughout the first part of the performance. This formal configuration of bodies falling down the stairs eliminates the possibility of identifying personalities. Instead, their number, unity of costume (blue trousers and blue shirt) and the low lighting highlight their anonymity, presence and materiality. They become bodies, human matter.

Within this canvas of bodies falling, other pictures are temporarily revealed, for example, near the middle of *Requiem gia to Telos tou Erotas* [*Requiem for the End of Love*], seven dancers appear at the top of the stairs, each one carrying on his back his own iron bed. They step down the stairs, and stop and place the beds at different points on the stairs. Afterwards, they lie down and start to move on, above and underneath the beds, ‘dancing’ a duet of men and beds. The spatial positioning of the beds on the uneven ground of the stairs presents the surface of

the beds to the full gaze of the spectators. This positioning transforms the conventional angle of vision for the spectators, allowing them to look at the beds as from above.

The dancers sit on the beds, stand up, roll underneath, and change positioning, depicting an experience of nightmare, agony and uneasiness. After a while, other male dancers appear to approach the beds. They also sit, lie and roll on the beds, as the first seven dancers have given them their place and are now lying on the stairs. At the end of the section, one performer from each couple lifts the bed onto his back with his arms open like a crucified figure, and disappears at the top of the stairs.

This is a scene where the sense of agony is clearly connected to male-to-male sexual desire. The interchange of bodies on the beds points to a shifting of identities, as one becomes the other, and the spectator cannot discriminate between the two. In contrast to the previous scene of falling, this one focuses on smaller frames, the beds, and on details of human movement, such as pushing the pelvis upward or touching the body.

As the music alternates between choral and aria sections, verses and longer sections of the poem's text are repeated and the Figure of Death slowly comes down the stairs, while at the same time bodies start to fall from the top of the stairs to the bottom in a continuous rhythm. At the bottom, they literally disappear into the ground, only to be replaced by other bodies appearing at the top of the stairs. This frantic recycling of human bodies, and the material disappearance of

bodies into the earth, creates an intense performance experience and inspires reflection on life trajectories, transcendence, the cycle of life and death, and the meaning of existence.

Among the male dancers, a performer (Tassos Papaioannou), wearing only his underwear, distinguishes himself, not only through his costume, but also through his relationship with the female soprano/Figure of Death. At another moment, the male performer lies on the stairs, centre stage, and Drivala sings above him, as if lamenting. She approaches his face and, with her song, seems to call him to stand up; her voice, like a Siren's song, metaphorically urges his body to resist falling. His upper body, momentarily, follows the trajectory of her voice and face, but it is all in vain. At other moments, he resembles images from Christian religious iconography, especially depictions of Christ. For example, he appears in front of another performer holding a curved position in his body, his arms open sideways, while the other dancer stands behind him, also with his arms open, reminiscent of the religious iconography of Christ depicted on the cross.

At the end of *Requiem gia to Telos tou Eroti* [*Requiem for the End of Love*], Tassos Papaioannou is lying on the table, and on his body are the traces of red wine that the Figure of Death poured on him. The image projected is of a wounded body. The interplay between the image (what the audience sees), its representational reference (the religious depiction of Christ after crucifixion and his Mother) and the clear conventions of the performance (the audience observing the Figure of Death pouring the wine) suggests an open dialogue of signs and meaning-making on the theme of death as sacrifice. The first part of the work

reaches its end as nine performers slowly descend the stairs, each one carrying, on his shoulder, the body of another performer. They place the bodies on the table and disappear, leaving the table full of corpses.

The second part of the performance is staged on and around the large wooden table, placed at the bottom of the stairs. The choreography's structure is based on small scenes following one another, but each one unfolding around a clear pictorial or thematic core, lasting equally with the duration of each song. Some scenes resonate with images from paintings by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1571–1610)²¹ or Papaioannou's teacher, Yannis Tsarouchis (Vounelaki, 1995b: 34, see p. 255) depicting a young Bacchus offering fruits, or images of fighting soldiers (soldiers is a common theme of Tsarouchis's paintings).

Other scenes 'translate' the song's words into visual images; for example, in the first song speaking about a field of flowers, a dancer lies on the table while his partner regards him tenderly. Suddenly, he opens the shirt of the lying dancer, revealing a chest full of flowers. In other scenes, movements create a rhythmic and visual pattern for the spectator to follow into the next scene; for example, the dancers rhythmically change position around, and swap seats at the table.

All the scenes are performed at a slow pace, with controlled energy and continuous flow. Even when dynamics are strong, such as in the fight scene, there

²¹ Caravaggio used the technique of *chiaroscuro* in his paintings to highlight the intensity and theatricality of his themes. He often used a naturalistic style in order to reveal human nature, despite the religious themes of his paintings.

is an overall atmosphere which does not foreground aggressiveness or confrontational physical force, only opposing dynamics and body contact. Above all, the character of the music, during the second part of the choreography as a whole, is melancholic and lyrical, a fact which intensifies the sense of tranquility and low intensity.

The lyrics, often repeated during the work, “Come and exchange body and loneliness” (Edafos Company, 1995 [programme]) express a desperate call for human companionship and communication. Dancers touch, fight, look at or caress each other. The issue of the ‘meeting’ of two (or more) people and the dramatic result of such an encounter is the main conceptual and movement motif²² in this second part. In duets or in groups, the dancers form transient communities, which, at times, resemble the Last Supper and, at other times, the ancient symposia. Wine, fruits, bread and water accompany their actions as they not only drink and eat, but also pour and place the wine and fruit on their bodies.

The choreography is mainly composed of simple movements, such as sitting, standing, walking or lying down, and actions, such as pouring water or wine into glasses or cutting and eating fruits. Light and darkness, and a continuous flow of energy, dramatise the scene, which otherwise could be regarded as an everyday image. Walking, drinking and sitting evoke a dialogue between the body, the light, the images and their poetics. They intensify the movements and stress the

²² Human relationships is a subject that permeates the choreographer’s oeuvre. In particular, the ‘meeting’ of two people, physically, emotionally or mentally, is a theme explored in many works. *To telftaio tragedy* [*The Last Song*] (presented as an autonomous piece and also as part of *Ta Tragoudia* [*The Songs*] (1991) and *Anthropini Dipsa* [*Human Thirst*] (1999) is the tragic meeting of a traveller (man) with a woman who reveals his innermost self. A small male duet, called *To Tragoudi tou 1999* [*The Song of 1999*], explores the theme of dependence and support in subtle physical terms between two bodies and in two-dimensional form on stage. This duet is included in two larger works, *Anthropini Dipsa* [*Human Thirst*] (1999) and *Gia Panda* [*For Ever*](2000).

materiality of the bodies, especially when materials like fluids or fruits come into contact with the human body, or when low lighting creates contrasts on the dancers' flesh in a way that resembles the aesthetics of Baroque painting.

Viewing the video of the performance reveals a series of dichotomies to which the work points. There are two parts: the first, based on movement, the second, on visual aspects. The first part is emotionally dark and psychologically intense; the second embraces serenity and calmness. The impact of the first part is visceral and further intensified by the volume of the space and the repetitiveness of falling. The second part is mainly visual; however, the senses of hearing (through music, song, noises and stamping) and smell (when cutting and eating fresh fruits) are stimulated, prescribing a multi-sensory experience.

Even the major movement material of the first part, falling, has a double meaning. Falling bodies literally diminish and finally disappear at the end of the staircase. Symbolically, they fall from grace and life to decay and death. The use of particular theatrical spaces contributes to the content and interpretation of choreography, and the interaction between movement and space intensifies the meanings of the work. Edafos Company's use of an old industrial site provided the necessary vast space for the scenery of the production, but also contributed, with its cold environment, to possible interpretations around the theme of death (Papanikolaou, 1995). Due to the volume of the space and the number of falling bodies, the impact is very powerful. Within this leitmotif of falling, which sets the framework of the entire choreography, the 'bed scene' (described earlier) brings to the foreground images and details, similar to the camera's zoom. In addition,

the tilt of the stage/stairs and the angle of perception from the audience resemble an overhead camera shot.

The embodiment of the fall in the first part is, however, in part illusory, for the bodies are not actually falling, in the sense that they are not in the air, suspended, before giving in to gravity. Instead, they are firmly in contact with gravity as they are lying on the stairs, but they are not upright either, and thus are not in a normal position. A continuous fall points to psychological and physical exhaustion. The human body diminishes in the vast space, but it is the number of bodies and their visual rhythm that reconfigure the performance as a site of destruction. The choreographer described the first part of the choreography as “a music storm, having a single image and a repetitive movement”, while in the second part “a melancholic ray of light appears and creates a mosaic of movement pieces, out of which emerge characters from everyday life” (Papaioannou cited in Logothetis, 1995, 22).

The choreography creates a peculiar space between the visual seduction of spectacle and physical and psychological exhaustion. The size of the space and the number of performers creates an experience of an anonymous mass of replicated bodies, against which the second part proposes a more specific, though not personal, perspective. Papaioannou offers a theatrical experience, which foregrounds the experience of body materiality through its massive manipulation and dehumanisation. The audience cannot discern human beings, but sees bodies. A tension between individual and mass, embodiment and visibility, involvement,

in the sense of being captured by the choreography, and detachment as in the second part, are intertwined throughout the performance.

6.5. AIDS and death in choreographed form

The work proposes a poetic picture of death, and shifts between suffering as a feeling of loss, and suffering as the result of human loneliness and difficulty in communication. The references to religious iconography, such as the figure of Christ and his sacrifice for humanity, place death in a framework of devastating heroism, beyond human measure, while illness is not explicitly presented in the work. Was it then a work on AIDS?

Dance scholar David Gere (2004) suggests three criteria that a dance should fulfill in order to be regarded as a work on AIDS. The first is to depict gayness, that is, a characteristic of gay behavior exemplifying what he terms “the abjection factor”. According to Judith Butler, a gay man cannot be a subject (as a heterosexual man) or an object (as a heterosexual woman) (cited in Gere, 2004: 11–12), and consequently Gere argues that a dance about AIDS must depict this abject position. His second criterion is the depiction of homosexual desire. His third criterion is the depiction of some sort of mourning (Gere, 2004: 11–12). All criteria apply in the case of *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*]. This suggests that the work is about AIDS, despite some media readings that focus on “illness of love” (Papanikolaou, 1995), references to sin (Logothetis, 1995: 22), or “death and erotic loneliness” (anon, 1995b: 3).

One of the most well-known and controversial examples of dance works on terminal diseases, including AIDS, was Bill T. Jones's choreography *Still/Here*, which premiered in New York in November 1994, one year before the premiere, in Athens, of the production of *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*]. Jones's choreography proved to be controversial, and it provoked vociferous debate in the American press. Arlene Croce (1994), the dance critic from *The New Yorker* magazine, refused to attend and review the performance, calling it "victim art", which renders the performance beyond criticism. Bill T. Jones's choreography was based on real-life experiences of people suffering from AIDS, cancer and other terminal diseases, and presented video and audio material from workshops undertaken with them.

Croce's refusal to comment was based on her conviction that it was not possible to offer an artistic judgment of people's suffering and that *Still/Here*, in presenting real dying people, had used social victimhood as a means of raising consciousness, thus producing a kind of art which has utilitarian purpose. Moreover, Croce expressed the view that art, which receives public and institutional support and funding, cannot be seen as a critique of the establishment, because, by its very nature, it is part of the establishment. Croce's article set off fierce debates, including accusations of political conservatism and homophobia, and a questioning of dance's function and its ideological manipulation.

Enos Leptou Sigy [*One Moment of Silence*] did not provoke such conflicts, partly because it represented death metaphorically and therefore avoided what Croce

called “intolerably voyeuristic spectatorship” (Croce, 1994: 54). But Croce’s point about the impossibility of questioning the system of dance’s support while being part of it raises interesting questions for Papaioannou’s creation. His work avoided social or artistic radicalism, but rather suggested a humanitarian and personal subtext. *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] explored death as common human experience, but through the lens of a gay sensibility rather than focusing on the social dimension of the AIDS epidemic. In this sense, the choreographer tried to confront the issue of appealing to a wider audience, as appropriate to the company’s stage of artistic development and its rank within the funding system, which set Edafos Company at the top of the dance funding hierarchy. The production did not follow Jones’s example in uniting art and personal politics but covered an ambiguous terrain where social critique was filtered through beautiful images (Kaltaki and Kaggelari’s argument, see p. 254-255) and aesthetisation of performance stressed theatricality rather than realism.

The artistic decision to examine such a theme, and the risk it implied, was supported by a sense of honesty on behalf of the artist. The links between personal feelings, honesty of the artist and their reflection within a dance work is an issue raised in an extensive article previewing *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*], published in the Sunday edition of Eleftherotypia. The journalist asked, “How can Papaioannou be honest if he won’t explore the dark side of homosexual love and AIDS?” (Papasprou, 1995: 48). The journalist referred to honesty as a stance which connects, in a direct way, feelings experienced in real life with artistic creation. Such a connection, however, seemed desirable for the journalist, perhaps because it secured artistic merit for the work. Papaioannou extended the

issue of honesty to art's responsibility on social issues in general and clarified his own ethical stance:

It wouldn't be possible for me to talk about love between men without mentioning its plague. I know that this position which connects the disease of the century with homosexuality is not politically correct... it is not only a means for social messages and utilitarian purposes... Art has the right to scream for our personal agonies... What myself and my friends have experienced in AIDS is the decimation of homosexual men.

Papaioannou cited in Papanikolaou, 1995

Recalling the debates around *Still/Here* (mentioned earlier in this chapter) Papaioannou tried to create an intermediate position for his art, between a vision of its social function, on one hand, and purely formal aims on the other, by focusing on personal experience. He argued for an art form relevant to the real, everyday experiences of the artists.

In the implied dilemma between socially/politically sensitive art and formal art, Papaioannou pointed to personal politics as a means of connecting life and art (personal and social), and politics and dance. This is a widely used strategy by many international dance makers, especially by artists concerned with colour, race, gender and ethnicity issues, such as Bill T Jones, Lloyd Newson or Mark Morris. In the case of Papaioannou, his reference to political correctness is important to the gay politics he wanted to pursue. In his statement, he implies his familiarity with many AIDS theorists and activists who tried to disassemble AIDS and gayness, and to dissociate the disease from sexual orientation. Despite this fact, Papaioannou decided to approach the issue of AIDS and homosexuality from this popularly held perspective, knowing that he was entering a slippery framework.

The fascination and fear of death is a major social and artistic issue, explored by arts, medicine, science, psychology and psychoanalysis, among other discourses, during different moments in history. However, the implication of death with homosexuality and AIDS in the late 20th century in Western societies increases the symbolic and literal fear and fascination with the body as a locus of all discourses. In theatrical terms, a similar (symbolic) fear and fascination of the audience with the body on stage provide an interesting layer of meaning-making for performance.

Susan Sontag's essays "Illness as Metaphor" and "AIDS and its metaphors" (1989) demonstrate that disease is not a neutral biological process. Sontag argues that public debate and opinions about a disease are loaded with particular feelings which, in turn, are projected onto the world. Her exploration reveals that, for example, tuberculosis was romanticised, cancer was feared as an uncontrollable invasion, and AIDS was sexually stigmatised. AIDS was connected to homosexuals and drug users and it was thus easily related to a cultural myth of death as punishment for immorality. In addition, homosexuality as personal identity and homosexuality in relation to dance are socially constructed and historically situated discourses. A historical examination of the construction of homosexuality and dance reveals that connections between the male dancer and homosexuality arose only in the early 20th century and they relate especially to the emergence of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes (Burt, 1997: 213).

The central themes of death and love in *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] are woven around:

the exchange of bodily fluids which is the highest point of love...that is the last natural thing we have...a basic need of human kind...but I know this is forbidden.

Papaioannou in Papanikolaou, 1995

Anxieties surrounding AIDS and the exchange of fluids were introduced in the opening scene of the choreography. In addition, at several moments in the work, wine or water is poured into glasses, performers drink and then exchange their cups, or cross their arms, bringing their own glass to the next dancer. *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] made reference to the exchange of fluids in its opening scene when two male dancers, in semi-darkness, slowly approach each other with their hands extending forward until they touch wrists, suggesting the contact of their blood. Later in the work, the soprano singer pours wine on Tassos Papaioannou, and his body becomes stained with it, like blood. In the second part of the choreography, water, wine and fruit juices were used on several occasions (pouring, eating, placing on the table and on bodies), provoking a reaction from one dance critic who referred to the scene as a “disgusting watermelon smearing” (Psaropoulou-Dimitriadou, 1995c: 42).

David Gere (2004) has eloquently examined how the source of anxiety around the (male) dancer, gayness and AIDS came to a crucial point of conjunction on the dancing body, and that the links between these notions are neither neutral nor historically irrelevant. According to Gere, the reason for the peak of fear and danger generated by the conflation of those signifiers (body, male, dancer and AIDS) is associated with the bodily intercourse taking place, unavoidably, in a

dance studio – especially the physical contact between bodies resulting in the mixing and exchanging of bodily fluids, such as sweat (Gere, 2004: 39–45). However this fear, if expressed in metaphorical terms, such as the use of wine or water in the performance, reinforces the safe distance separating the audience from the stage while playing with associations of blood, wound and death.

In addition to visual elements, *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] used poetic texts, arias, choral music (first part) and other songs (second part); it had a dramaturgy of action and it facilitated the visual, the auditory, but also the kinesthetic layer, recalling what Hutcheon and Hutcheon called “excess of effect” (Hutcheon and Hutcheon, 2004: 7). Examining Western concepts of mortality as manifested historically in opera productions, and their impact on the audience, Linda and Michael Hutcheon (2004) point to the fact that opera had to attract audiences into the theatre because, among other reasons, it is an art form expensive to produce (like dance performance). They argue that this aim is achieved by using two crucial strategies. The first is opera’s ability to appeal to the audience’s anxieties and desires at the same time (like death or AIDS themes can) and the second is opera’s combination of a range of perceptual layers, namely, the dramatic, the narrative and the thematic, along with the verbal, the visual and the auditory. This second strategy is called the “excess of effect”.

Within this overall, multisensory theatrical experience, the role of the body (of spectator and performer alike) is crucial, for the body receives and generates visceral responses. The sense of connection and communication between the performers’ and the spectators’ bodies was first suggested by John Martin in his

notion of ‘metakinesis’ (Martin, 1965 [1933]: 13–16). Martin, referring to modern dance’s communicative potential, suggested that modern dance could generate muscular responses in its spectators and thus communicate with them (Martin, 1965 [1933]: 13–16). Ramsay Burt has suggested that a visceral response from a spectator, while watching a performance, is not necessarily an actual muscular reaction, as the notion of metakinesis implies, but a recognition of common experiences of embodiment, a recognition of sameness that spectator and performer share (Burt, 1997: 219).

Multisensory experiences, like in opera productions or in performances such as *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*], to some extent overcome traditional viewing conventions. This overcoming in *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] links to its theme of death as an issue transcending human power, which supports the use of overwhelming multiple media. The provocation of visceral responses might also be seen as resistance to the total power of vision, which according to Peggy Phelan “summons surveillance and the law; it [visibility] provokes voyeurism, fetishism, the colonial/imperial appetite for possession” (1993: 6). Visceral and kinesthetic experiences open alternative modes of empowerment for both spectators and performers, opening an in-between space of power.

Furthermore, the theme of the work is homosexual desire and, if gay dance can be defined as choreography in which men are the erotic object of the male gaze (Jackson cited in Burt, 1995: 58), homosexual desire is depicted in the gazes between the male performers, their soft and tender touches and in the use of a

single verse that can be heard at different moments during the second part of the choreography. This verse expresses a calling and a wish, “come to interchange bodies and loneliness” (Edafos Company, 1995 [programme]).

Enos Leptou Sigy [*One Moment of Silence*] was a gay dance work that was expected to address a wide audience; issues of acceptance were crucial, implying a further reason for its tragic tone. Jackson argues that, for a gay dance to be accepted, it must have a tragic end (Jackson cited in Burt, 1995: 59), since patriarchal society conceives homosexuality as deviation from normative sexual behaviour, a transgression of limits which brings punishment in order to eliminate the danger of ethical imbalance.

Death, AIDS and loss in this and similar works became issues for artistic exploration, but at the same time these issues reaffirm the limits of representation. Male dancers on stage became the objects of the male and female gaze of the audience. But in addition, they (especially in the second part) enjoy looking at one another, thus interchanging subject and object positions. Although their movements resemble everyday actions, they are folded within a theatricality, which maintains the framework of representation.

It is useful to consider this sensibility within the context of other relevant works in Greece. For example, examining the poem *Lazarus* by Demetrios Capetanakis, the literary and cultural scholar Dimitris Papanikolaou suggests that, on the surface, the poem is a powerful dramatisation of someone’s dying moments. In the last verse of the poem, the poet writes “and the door creaks letting in my unambiguous

crime”, which opens a space to uncertainty, leaving the poem ambiguously open to interpretations (Papanikolaou, 2006 [online]: 201–223). Papanikolaou suggests that Capetanakis’s oeuvre in English was concerned not so much with the expression of the poet’s homosexuality and his ‘coming out’ in London, but with the problems of identification in general. He argues that Capetanakis’s English texts are imbued with a complex picture of competing identifications of homosexuality, ethnicity and artistic identity. Through Capetanakis’s cryptic messages, his poems may be read not as expressions of an ideal but as a process of unveiling the tensions and problems of producing a self (Papanikolaou, 2006 [online]: 211). In a similar manner, the choreography explores and proposes an alternation of dancers, and a shifting of viewpoints of the spectators, which foreground the fluidity of identities.

Papanikolaou also claims that painter Yannis Tsarouchis, during the 1930s, was searching for his own personal artistic language by incorporating Western influences, some of them already dated (Papanikolaou, 2010 [online]: 35). At the same time, his exploration was in keeping with the Hellenic vision of the times, but contrary to conservatism and normative discourses; Tsarouchis made a persistent exploration of the representation of the male body. Despite Tsarouchis’s diverse visual influences during his artistic career, his exploration of the male body remained important throughout his life. In particular, his exploration was focused on body poses that were capable of bringing homoerotic desire to the foreground of the paintings’ semiotic structure. Even though Tsarouchis’s own theoretical texts, as well as his critics’ analysis, refer to eroticism, and the

adoration of the male body, they do not use homosexuality as an analytical category for his oeuvre (Papanikolaou, 2010 [online]: 35–37).

Papanikolaou's argument is that Tsarouchis, as well as other homosexual artists in Greece, managed to bring his art to the centre of the cultural production of the country. He thus became part of the dominant canon by proposing a framework of reference for his art, which, at the same time, activated and denied homoeroticism. Tsarouchis's paintings proposed a web of possible frameworks for his oeuvre, ranging from Hellenic, homosocial, and also homosexual perspectives at the same time, but whether those meanings were adapted or not depended on the viewer and the historical context. By using this strategy, Tsarouchis and other artists tried to confront homosexual prejudices on one hand, and the media exploitation of gay politics on the other, as expressed after the 1980s (Papanikolaou, 2010 [online]: 35–37).

This double code of homosexual denial and exposition created a particular ethical strategy for some gay artists, which Papaioannou shared and, through his work, tried to bring to the foreground. As a consequence, *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] was not an activist gay work, but a subtle re-enactment of this Greek homosexual art sensibility, which took on a new perspective, focusing on the problem of AIDS, which, at the time, in Greece, was at its peak.

6.6. Conclusion

This chapter has examined Edafos Company and its production *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*], the first dance work in Greece to explore AIDS and

homosexuality. The work was produced within a context of unprecedented support from the Ministry of Culture and private sponsors, and occurs at a crucial point in the company's development when it was beginning to be involved in large-scale productions. The company tried to interconnect personal history, social context and aesthetic form to propose a new way of communicating and engaging with the audience. The theme of the work provided a vehicle to artistically explore multiple gay identities, and reactivated a tradition of gay sensibility, existing in the arts in Greece since the 1930s, in a way that reanimated Baroque sensibilities of affect.

Enos Leptou Sigy [*One Moment of Silence*] created an in-between space of representational strategies for dancing bodies, which played between conformism and transgression, and navigated itself within the tensions of State support, audience expectation and social attitudes on gay identities. The choreography suggested the interplay of changing subject positions, which foregrounded contemporary conceptions of identity and created a space for changing patriarchal, normative viewing positions. The personal and social, and the individual and collective, were blurred as the performance balanced between the spectacular and the affective, bringing dancing bodies in tune with one of the major social issues of the times, AIDS, and contemporary cultural and social discourses. This examination also revealed the pressures between artistic choices, socio-cultural frameworks at this historical moment, and the tensions artists like Papaioannou had to face.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

7.1. Modernisation and dance in Greece – as a coda

This research, as stated in the Introduction, examines and offers a cultural critique of an unexplored area of dance history in Greece, the burgeoning dance of the 1990s. In particular, the focus is on the middle of the decade, as a period of significant transformation and tensions, marked by the notion of modernisation. The three works, *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] by Apostolia Papadamaki (SineQuaNon), *Daphnis and Chloe* by Konstantinos Rigos (Oktana Dancetheatre) and *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] by Dimitris Papaioannou (Edafos Company), produced and performed in 1995, provide case studies for exploring the interplay of dance and its social, cultural and economic context.

The particular case studies represented three different stages of the funding system scheme (one-year funding for SineQuaNon, three-year funding for Oktana Dancetheatre, and the maximum three-year funding for Edafos Company), and offer examples of the ways artists responded to processes of modernisation and Europeanisation in Greece. They also highlight how these processes penetrated and shaped dancing bodies and how these phenomena affected the frame within which these dances were understood and evaluated. On the other hand, dance artists, through their practices, explored ways of negotiating these ideas according to their needs and proposed alternative notions: such as the communal spirit as counterbalance to the advent of individualism, critique of a (national) heritage, tensions between elitism and consumerism and, finally, perspectives on notions of tradition, innovation and change in dance.

An important process in the research was to locate my speaking position in relation to the choreographing/dancing, reviewing (writing) and viewing of these dances, in a way which could provide a critical framework. Within this process, the analyses of the dances themselves, a methodology rarely used in Greek dance studies, brought the moving bodies into the complex web of meaning-making.

The dancing bodies, with their conventional dance and cultural connotations, also participate in other discourses and contexts, forming the discursive perspective of the research, itself historically and culturally embedded. More importantly, this formation has its own power, which cannot be ignored, for: “What can be said – what is possible to say at a particular time and place – affects the choreography to engage the circuits of criticism and publicity and to consolidate itself in historical accounts” (Franko, 2007b: 170). The research contributes to the visibility of Greek contemporary dance within international research and academia in a particular way, but at the same time is itself a framework for perceiving the case studies emanating from my own socio-historical background.

The study is focused at the crux of a range of issues: processes of ‘modernisation’ in the country which had political, social and dance ramifications; the need for transformation in cultural, social and political contexts; cultural policy’s radical shifts in supporting dance excellence; the emergence of consumerist culture; and the artists’ own practices for finding their artistic voice and creating their artistic identities. The consequences of this combination of processes were the development of an active dance field; a dance hierarchy supported and sustained

by the State funding system; an audience for dance; and a perspective on dance as a legitimate site for exploring social, cultural and personal issues. All of these are evident today in Greece, indicating the importance of the period for what followed.

The case studies argued that the companies captured the need for change and transformation in art and society but they also proposed models for living in the present and envisioning the past. The consequence of this exploration is to illuminate both the works and their context in a new way. By locating dance practices within larger sociocultural contexts, the thesis demonstrated that these companies were not simply the artistic endeavours of talented artists but they functioned amidst, and by means of, their times. The study has sought to develop, for the first time in the Greek context, an embodied dance perspective on the politics of modernisation and to argue for the importance of the body in this period, a site generally neglected in the existing social, political and cultural analyses in Greek academia.

7.2. Contribution to knowledge: implications for dance history

Shedding new light on the formation of the dance field in the country in historical terms (see Chapter 2), the thesis has shown that, due to the efforts and practices of personalities such as Koula Pratsika and Rallou Manou, contemporary dance was considered not as experimental or vanguard art, but as an elitist and serious artistic practice related to a whole philosophy of life. Produced and perceived as part of a holistic cultivation of, mainly, middle- and upper-middle class female individuals,

dance, until the mid-1980s, was separated from labour and the economy, and was valued for its aesthetic features.

In the absence of a strong ballet or contemporary dance tradition and institutions, contemporary dance artists in the 1990s dominated the dance field. Paradoxically, however, the artists examined in this thesis forcefully rejected the dance past of the country, in a manner which seems disproportional to the comparatively sparse dance tradition. Chapters 2 and 3 sought to suggest that the artists' denial of the past can be explained partly by their different dance knowledge and interests, and, partly, by the increased importance of the body in processes of identity formation, personal expression and cultural exploration of that period, part of a larger project of democratisation and modernisation.

The democratisation processes of the post-dictatorship era brought not only an ambiguous sense of tolerance expressed in social attitudes, values, and body practices, but also allowed for a symbolic 'decompression' of (literal and metaphorical) constraints that had accumulated on social and individual bodies for the last fifty years (from the inter-war period until the end of junta). Focusing on bodies' histories counterbalances the tendency to write history from a disembodied perspective, foregrounding political, economic or other facts. It also reveals dance as a site of political and cultural tensions. In this regard, the body appears ambivalent: on the one hand, it becomes a means to articulate identity or to self-express; on the other, it appears vulnerable to consumerist pressures.

The methodology of the thesis suggested an alternative model for examining Greek dance history and a revision of the progressive logic of dance history from Pratsika to the 1990s. It saw dance as constituted within the dynamics of institutions, discourses and bodies, forming a web of power relations within which shifts of balance allow change to occur. Under this perspective, in the 1990s, the body became prominent in youth culture, consumer culture and physical culture, and was linked to the sense of a person's identity in a malleable way. Within this context, the artists examined here shifted the aim of dance from artistic creation to politics of identity for they wanted to relate their bodies and their aesthetic practice to their way of being-in-the-world. The difference from previous generations was also evident for the audience, which could experience during the performance that dancing bodies were speaking for and to their times.

Finally, previous accounts of the dance history of Greece have constructed particular positive or negative histories; either glorifying the dance personalities (Fessa, 2004), or posing an ideological critique which approached dance history as a process evolving from propaganda (Pratsika) to dance's autonomy in the late 20th century (Koustas, 2007), or as an evolution around similar themes which construct a Greek dance identity (Tzartzani, 2007). As a consequence, these approaches did not allow complexity, contradiction and fluidity to emerge, an aim that this investigation tried to pursue by exploring the dichotomies inherent in modernisation processes.

7.3. Contribution to knowledge: dance and institutional context reconsidered

As the first academic dance research investigating the changes in dance funding initiated by the Ministry of Culture in the mid-1990s, this thesis has sought to reveal that the major tension of this policy was the interplay between, on the one hand, the support of dance experimentation on the premise that the system of cultural subsidy could counterbalance market pressures, and on the other hand, the fostering of dance as part of cultural prestige. Public funding and State policies had their own rationales which sometimes pressured artists towards one, and not the other, direction, while also pre-structuring audience's expectations. For example, the re-activation of Greek heritage exemplified in the production of *Daphnis and Chloe* by Oktana Dancetheatre (see Chapter 5) and the commissioning of *Medea* by Edafos Company (see Chapter 6), were intended as valuable means for promoting dance abroad and for increasing dance's audience by using familiar narratives. The funding system determined the conditions of contemporary dance production and, in the process, established and reinforced a hierarchical structure within the dance field.

The objectives and practices of the major dance structures of the mid-1990s (Ministry of Culture, Athens Music Hall, private sponsors and festivals), regardless of their differences, tended to exemplify a rather unified ideological rationale, that of supporting and promoting contemporary dance on the basis of excellence, conceived as technical accomplishment and polished aesthetic finish. More importantly, dance was conceived and supported on the premise that it could become the bearer of a refreshing new approach to the notion of Greek

heritage/tradition, and thus promote the cultural identity of the country within Europe. This orientation became dominant within dance policy, with important implications for dance production through the control of available resources, which in the long term became the only available resource for the dance artists.

In effect, the dance field and dance structures tended to be homogenised in terms of production means, including a focus on producing every year, the concentration of material resources in State institutions, the neglect of supporting choreographing research and the appraisal of a media-oriented artistic product. Dance production and reception (with the advent of media) followed a similar path, at the expense of other – artistic, economic or institutional – possibilities. In the long term, this ‘standardisation’ of how dance could be materially produced, what dance was expected to achieve and how it was valued, posed difficulties in nurturing experimentation and alternative modes of producing, while within the dance field competition increased due to limited resources.

In other words, the companies examined in the thesis represent examples of the variety of dance practices and of the vitality of the dance field in the early 1990s. As a result, or as part of this vitality, dance institutions and the dance funding policy of the Ministry of Culture were developed. Paradoxically, however, these very conditions which initially gave unprecedented opportunities for creating, presenting and expanding dance practices, in the long term proved to be problematic and centralised the production of dance around a particular rationale of dance production.

7.4. Contribution to knowledge: the artists and dance in the 1990s

The 1990s saw the vitality of the body and the exuberance of creativity generated by the desire and aim for change in different areas of life (arts, society and economics). Most importantly for dance, these conditions facilitated the development of some categories of culture, such as contemporary dance, which grew to an unprecedented extent in both size and vitality. For that reason, dance offered to cultural institutions, venues and the media a field for expansion in order to capitalise upon the interest of an increasingly (bodily) literate public. As a consequence, dance artists were subject to forces which jeopardised their creative freedom, and the same forces predisposed, in significant ways, the audience's reception of dance.

In Chapters 4 to 6, the specific case studies of the three companies are regarded as representative of the burgeoning dance scene. That scene –and the three companies' work– was characterised by a neglect of tradition, a connection between dance, bodies and the artists' sense of self-identity and a strong need to communicate with their times. In addition, the three case studies examined within the conditions of history and policy (examined in Chapters 2 and 3) explored something of the range of possibilities that existed within the system of State-funded dance production.

Chapter 4 investigated SineQuaNon as a company positioned at the lower end of the funding ladder and which operated on a small scale. The company represented the influence of American postmodern dance and release techniques in Greece,

proposing a physical, non-narrative work, which reinforced the company's experimental identity. The physical language, structure and embodied force of *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] created by Apostolia Papadamaki, proposed the conditions for building a sense of a community, in a moment when individualism and self-interest were dominant social values. The communal spirit was embodied in the work as the need for dancers' interdependence, the unity of performers and their sense of personal empowerment. Reviews of *ProsOlotoixos* [*Tour de Force*] reveal a dichotomy between expression or narrative in dance and its formal properties. Concerns about the thematic meaning of the work arise in the published criticism, exposing the longstanding connection of dance with theatre in the country, and the difficulty of overcoming preconceptions based on this connection.

Chapter 5 examined Oktana Dancetheatre as a company focused on re-approaching dance history through its re-writings of dance historical masterpieces. Institutionally, the choreographer, Konstantinos Rigos, was an 'outsider' who, by adopting an international perspective, strove to create a cosmopolitan artistic identity. The envisioning of 'Europe without frontiers' has ramifications within *Daphnis and Chloe* as the work plays with approaching ancient Greece through a Western European perspective. In addition, the choreography suggested a blurring of nature and culture, of order and disorder, displayed in the use of nudity, which questioned conservative conceptions of dance and opened dance to moral political debates.

Chapter 6 explored Edafos Company, the oldest and the most highly acclaimed of the three companies included in the thesis. The company's position in the dance field allowed it to create large-scale productions and fostered high audience expectations. *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Moment of Silence*] by Dimitris Papaioannou was the first work in Greece to explore the social issue of the AIDS epidemic, proposing a double experience of embodied affection and visual contemplation corresponding to the two parts of the work. The work investigated male identity, death and loss as a struggle for self-identity, and also deployed a Baroque theatricality which played with the conventions of art and the constructed nature of both performer and spectator.

All three companies exemplify an insistence on embodied forms of experience and communication, which enriches the impact of performance on the spectators and opens possibilities for audience engagement in multiple ways. In addition, the three case studies pointed to the possibility of activating the audience's perception and reflection of its own role within the performance situation, an opportunity suggesting a new relation between dance and its audience beyond aesthetic experience alone. The works examined generated a sense of reflection that could make their audiences re-think their position in relation to the surrounding socio-cultural reality. In particular, SineQuaNon contributed in envisioning a leap out of the present and sharing an optimistic eagerness for moving on.

Chapter 2 and the case studies (Chapters 4–6) offered a critique of the myth of Greece's isolation, expressed on two fronts: dance knowledge and the perspective on the Greek situation as 'exceptional'. Indeed, experience of the changes in

dance happening in European and American metropolises far away from Greece arrived in the country rather late. The thesis, however, has argued that contemporary dance in Greece and its artists from the 1930s until today were, to varying degrees, in contact with these developments because they travelled and studied abroad.

Furthermore, contemporary dance –like ballet– was an international dance practice that came to Greece through various routes, despite its close connections with the nation and a national(istic) ideology. A major argument put forward here is that this myth was actually constructed on the basis of a restricted and selective circulation of dance knowledge and dance experiences (as forms of body training, cultural education or spectatorship). This circulation remained within middle- and upper-middle class circles until the 1980s. The thesis suggested (Chapter 3) that processes of democratisation in the social field, and a redistribution of material resources and symbolic capital within the cultural, social-political and dance spheres in general, allowed qualitative and quantitative changes to become evident at different levels of social organisation and dance (individual actions, institutional aims and State policy). In other words, it was the expansion of dancing agents, the diffusion of dance experiences and changes in conceptualising dance that made a difference in the 1990s.

In addition, American and European cultural influences have contributed to the development of dance in Greece since the beginning of the 20th century, even though these philosophies and practices were modified in the Greek context leading to competing forces within the field at several historical moments. The

three examined companies also drew on these influences; however they were also keen to emphasise the distinctiveness of their artistic identities, which practically they achieved by assembling, modifying and re-combining practices and philosophies for their own purposes, stressing their differences from, rather than their similarities to, the Greek dance models.

The ‘exceptional’ nature of the Greek paradigm, a term often used in economic and political analyses, suggests that Greece exemplifies a range of peculiar characteristics different from other countries. My study has argued that distinct and special characteristics are always evident, not only between but also within countries, and even within every artist’s work. However, there are also significant connections with general conditions and dynamics across and within nations and institutions. By the same token, the development of contemporary dance in the 1990s in Greece is a phenomenon relevant to the socio-cultural conditions of Greece, particularly its process of ‘modernisation’, and also to developments in other countries of the European South, such as Spain and Portugal, which underwent similar processes at a similar historical moment (Monés, Carrasco, Casero-García & Colomé, 2000: 144–167; Lepecki, 2001).

In addition, the phenomenon can also be seen as part of a wider movement, that of the emergence of new dance in a series of European countries from the 1970s onwards, and of the increase in importance of culture in social and economic terms within Europe.

7.5. Suggestions for further research

There is the possibility of fruitful further research comparing companies from different national contexts to identify differences and similarities and to reflect on the historical constitution and cultural imperatives for dance in Europe in the 1990s, especially in relation to European cultural policies and the imperative of ‘European identity’.

A further implication of this thesis for dance history is a proposition for examining dance production and reception in countries that do not have an important presence in the international dance scene and market. This research not only resists the reproduction of a selective construction of dance history, but allows for reflection on neglected dance cultures, even within the Eurocentric paradigm. This approach could be further developed by investigating more fully dance promotion, the policies of dance festivals and the imperatives of politics affecting the production, circulation and reception of dance in Europe and internationally. This research also explores developments in a period – the 1990s – recognised as significant for American and European dance, which remains, however, under-examined across different national contexts.

The framework of historical examination proposed in this thesis can also lead to (re)examination of other periods of dance history in Greece, contributing to an examination of their complex forces and ideological underpinnings. Examples of periods that would benefit from research are the early post-dictatorship years and dance as a means for political and social change; the decade of the 1950s as the

first decade of the Cold War period and the initiation of Athens Festival as part of cultural diplomacy; or the early 20th century as a period of rapid industrialization, expansion of the nation state and social and historical changes in relation to dance performances by, mostly, visiting artists such as Duncan. These periods have not been examined thoroughly, yet, but they seem to concentrate interesting shifts in power balances between discourses, dancing bodies and institutions.

Initially when starting this research, my aim was to interrogate the ambivalent and contradictory forces and tensions playing simultaneously during a period of change in dance in my country because this period was experienced by many people of my generation as a dynamic and creative moment, valuable for academic examination. Since then, modernisation as Europeanisation has come under extreme scrutiny due to the current economic crisis in Greece. The re-emergence of the importance of that period, albeit in a tragic way, supports the major premise of my study, that is, that the fulfillment of that historical moment of great hope has proved extremely problematic.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1
SAMPLE OF PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM



ETHICS BOARD

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title and brief description of Research Project:

Construction of identities in contemporary dance in Greece in the 1990s: a socio-cultural investigation of tensions and meanings.

This research is an examination of the construction of artistic identities of three contemporary dance companies (*Edafos Dance Company, Oktana Dancetheatre & SineQuaNon*), and the exploration of ideas and meanings relevant to dance of that time in Greece. Furthermore, I am interested in exploring interactions and tensions underlying the processes of constructing their artistic identities, the social issues and meanings hidden in these processes, and the web of tensions between artistic aspects, wider sociocultural issues, institutional framework and everyday life.

Name and status of Investigator:

STERIANI TSINTZILONI, Part-time PhD student at Roehampton University

Consent Statement:

I agree to take part in this research, and I am aware that I am free to withdraw at any point. My overall contribution will be credited in the final thesis, and written permission will be given for quoting or paraphrasing me directly. The researcher will keep audio tapes from the interviews, as well as copies of visual material (video recordings of past performances, photographs etc) from the company's archive and she will not distribute this material without my consent. I am aware that parts of the content of the interviews, as well as some kind of visual material (excerpts of videos, photographs etc) will be included in the final thesis, and all the authors (director, photographer, choreographer etc) will be credited. After our collaboration, and only if I ask her to do so, the researcher will destroy any documents containing my contact details and personal information. My participation to the research is voluntary.

Name:

Signature

Date

Please note: if you have a concern about any aspect of your participation, please raise this with the investigator, or with the Dean of School (or equivalent), who is*

APPENDIX 1

SAMPLE OF PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

(*FAO the investigator: if you are a student at Roehampton, complete this section with the details of your Director of Studies. If you are a member of staff, complete this section with the details of your Dean of School.)

Name: Prof. Stephanie Jordan

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APPENDIX 2
DANCE COMPANIES' FUNDING 1992¹ - 1995

EDAFOS COMPANY	YEAR	AMOUNT (in drachmas)
	1992	2.5 million
	1993	5 million
	1994	15 million
	1995	20 million

OKTANA DANCETHEATRE	YEAR	AMOUNT
	1992	1.5 million
	1993	2.5 million
	1994	6 million
	1995	15 million

SINEQUANON	YEAR	AMOUNT
	1992	-
	1993	-
	1994	-
	1995	8 million

¹ Records on dance funding prior to 1992 are not available

APPENDIX 3
STATE DANCE FUNDING 1992-1995

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total budget for dance</i>	<i>Range of amount per company</i>	<i>Total number of companies</i>	<i>Analysis of funding</i>
1992	56 million drachmas	1 – 6 million	24	3 companies received 6 million 1 company received 4 million 1 company received 3,5 million 2 companies received 3 million 1 company received 2 million 1 company received 2,5 million 6 companies received 1.5 million 8 companies received 1 million
1993	67 million drachmas	1-6 million	28	3 companies received 6 million 1 company received 5 million 1 company received 4 million 3 companies received 3 million 4 companies received 2,5 million 2 companies received 2 million 6 companies received 1,5 million 8 companies received 1 million

APPENDIX 3
STATE DANCE FUNDING 1992-1995

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total budget for dance</i>	<i>Range of amount for each company</i>	<i>Total number of companies</i>	<i>Analysis of funding</i>
1994	95 million drachmas	2- 15 million	18	3 companies received 15 millions 2 companies received 6 millions 1 company received 5 million 1 company received 4 million 7 companies received 3 million 4 companies received 2 million
1995	206 million drachmas	3 – 30 million In the three year plan scheme: 15-30 million In the one year plan scheme: 3 - 8 million	6 companies in the three year plan 18 companies in the one year plan	Three year plan: 1 company received 30 million for 1 st year 3 companies received 20 million for 1 st year 2 companies received 15 million for 1 st year One year plan: 4 companies received 8 million 6 companies received 5 million 8 companies received 3 million

APPENDIX 3
STATE DANCE FUNDING 1992-1995

APPENDIX 4
SINEQUANON CHOREOCRONICLE (1992-1995)

TITLE	CHOREO-GRAPHER	PREMIERE	THEATRE	MUSIC	COSTUMES	LIGHTING	DANCERS
<i>Eimetha toso ena</i> [We are so one]	Apostolia Papadamaki	1992	Municipal Theatre of Athens	Bella Bartok	Apostolia Papadamaki	Apostolia Papadamaki	Dimitris Sotiriou, Kiki Baka, Apostolia Papadamaki, Tasos Alexadiadis
<i>Oneirevomoun na ziso yperoxa</i> [I was dreaming of living wonderfully]	Anna-Sofia Kallinikidou	1992	Municipal Theatre of Athens	Richard Wagner, Tuxedo Moon, Gustav Maler	Anna-Sofia Kallinikidou	Anna-Sofia Kallinikou	Lena Golemati, Katerina Kasioumi, Vicky Messini, Apostolia Papadamaki, Kiki Baka, Dimitris Sotiriou
<i>Den anthisan mataios</i> [They didn't blossom in vain]	Kalliopi Sfika	1992	Municipal Theatre of Athens	Branka, Cbiridob	Kalliopi Sfika	Kalliopi Sfika	Lena Golemati, Dimitris Sotiriou, Kalliopi Sfika, Apostolia Papadamaki, Anna-Sofia Kallinikidou
<i>Ego mia synginitikia</i> [Sentimental Lady]	Dimitris Sotiriou	1992	Municipal Theatre of Athens	Richard Wagner	Dimitris Sotiriou	Dimitris Sotiriou	Katerina Kasioumi

APPENDIX 4
SINEQUANON CHOREOCRONICLE (1992-1995)

TITLE	CHOREO-GRAPHER	PREMIERE	THEATRE	MUSIC	COSTUMES	LIGHTING	DANCERS
<i>Repeat</i>	Anna-Sofia Kallinikidou	9/12/1993	Studio M. Cunningham – New York		Anna Sofia-Kallinikidou	Swell Phuah	Apostolia Papadamaki, Anna-Sofia Kallinikidou
<i>B-Room</i>	Apostolia Papadamaki	9/12/1993	Studio M. Cunningham-New York	Thomas Tallis, The Ramones, Ministry, Tom Waits	Nadia Georgiou	Swell Phuah	Rodrigo Esteva, Mariah Maloney, Elena Alonso, Ted Johnson, Tanya Stepan, Stavroula Siamou, Gerardo Espinosa, Yukiko Shinozaki
<i>Bath-tub</i>	1) Kiki Baka, 2) Anna-Sofia Kallinikou, 3) Apostolia Papadamaki	19/10/1994	Ergostasio - Athens	1) Johann Strauss, Greek marches 2) Tom Waits, Roy Orbison, Elvis Presley 3) Jimmy Hendrix	1) Kiki Baka 2) Anna-Sofia Kallinikidou 3) Apostolia Papadamaki	Eleftheria Deko	1) Maria Anthymidou, Anna-Sofia Kallinikidou, Michalis Nalbandis, Dimitris Sotiriou 2) Alik Kazouri, Kiki Baka, Dimitris Sotiriou 3) Katerina Kasioumi, Stavroula Siamou, Persa Stamatopoulou, Apostolia Papadamaki, Tassos Alexiadis
<i>Gia ta matia tou kosmou (For Impression's Sake)</i>	Dimitris Sotiriou	25/5/1995	Ergostasio Athens	Eric Satie	Dimitris Sotiriou	Panagiotis Manousis	Eirini Spyridakou, Linda Kapetanea, Dimitris Sotiriou

APPENDIX 4
SINEQUANON CHOREOCRONICLE (1992-1995)

TITLE	CHOREO- GRAPHER	PREMIERE	THEATRE	MUSIC	COSTUMES	LIGHTING	DANCERS
<i>ProsOlotoixos (Tour de Force)</i>	Apostolia Papadamaki	25/5/1995	Ergostasio Athens	Hector Zazou, John Jurie, Michael Nyman, A. Balancescu	Lena Papachristo philou	Panagiotis Manousis	Kiki Baka, Anna-Sophia Kallinikidou, Alexandros Karydis, Michalis Papandonakis (Fotis Nikolaou), Dimitris Sotiriou

APPENDIX 5
OKTANA DANCETHEATER CHOREOCRONICLE (1989-1995)

TITLE	CHOREO-GRAPHER	PREMIERE	THEATRE	MUSIC	COSTUMES	SET/PROPS	LIGHTING	OTHER ELEMENTS	DANCERS
<i>Arxondisa</i> [<i>Noble Lady</i>]	Konstantinos Rigos & Niki Louladaki	20/5/1989 Choreographic Competition “Rallou Manou”	Knossos	Vassilis Tsitsanis	Konstantinos Rigos & Niki Louladaki	Konstantinos Rigos & Niki Louladaki			Konstantinos Rigos, Niki Louladaki, Eleftheria Liakopoulou
<i>Soma Thymisou</i> [<i>Body Remember</i>]	Konstantinos Rigos	20/5/1990 Dromena	Dimotiko Theatro ‘Agios Sostis’ [Municipal Theatre “Agios Sostis”]	Konstantinos Rigos (music arrangement)	Orpina Galaïou	Orpina Galaïou	Konstantinos Rigos		Gogo Aroni, Antigoni Gyra, Konstantinos Rigos, Marina Vernikou, Barbra Gyempiaou, Stavroula Kalapotharakou, Katerina Xirogianni, Marina Fournistaki, Nikos Irakleiotis, Stathis Lymberopoulos
<i>Mipos eiste tis ekdromis?</i> [<i>Have you seen the Acropolis yet?</i>]	Konstantinos Rigos	27/4/1990 Choreographic Competition “Rallou Manou”	Dimotiko Theatro ‘Agios Sostis’ [Municipal Theatre “Agios Sostis”]	Konstantinos Rigos (music arrangement)	Orpina Galaïou		Konstantinos Rigos		Aroni Gogo, Titi Andonopoulou, Antigoni Gyra, Georgia Giatrakou, Lili Petridi, Christos Karantzolas, Konstantinos Rigos

APPENDIX 5

OKTANA DANCETHEATER CHOREOCRONICLE (1989-1995)

TITLE	CHOREO-GRAPHER	PREMIERE	THEATRE	MUSIC	COSTUMES	SET/PROPS	LIGHTING	OTHER ELEMENTS	DANCERS
<i>Ektrosis/Oneirou Nyxeis Pou Isos Na Afysame</i> [Abortion/Fragments of a dream that we left behind]	Konstantinos Rigos	10/7/1990	Parko Eleftherias [Park of Freedom Theatre]	Konstantinos Rigos (music arrangement)	Orpina Galaïou	Orpina Galaïou	Konstantinos Rigos		Gogo Aroni, Georgia Giatrakou, Antigoni Gyra, Rania Damigou, Lila Zafeiropoulou, Christos Karantzolas, Aspasia Komi, Maria Palioura, Valia Papachristou, Lili Petridi, Konstantinos Rigos
<i>Domatio 5 [Room 5]</i>	Konstantinos Rigos	14/5/1991 Dromena	Dimotiko Theatro ‘Agios Sostis’ [Municipal Theatre “Agios Sostis”]	Leos Janacek, Gustav Mahler, Hector Zazou, Arnold Schöenberg, Georgi Ligeti, George Bizet, Renée Aubry, Tonis Maroudas	Orpina Galaïou	Orpina Galaïou	Konstantinos Rigos, Kiki Baka	Text: H. Pinter, G. Seferis, M. Karapanou, B. Alexakis	Georgia Giatrakou, Antigoni Gyra, Lila Zafeiropoulou, Christos Karantzolas, Aspasia Komi, Maria Palioura, Valia Papachristou, Lili Petridi, Konstantinos Rigos, Dimitris Sotiriou, Andonis Foniadakis

APPENDIX 5

OKTANA DANCETHEATER CHOREOCRONICLE (1989-1995)

TITLE	CHOREO-GRAPHER	PREMIERE	THEATRE	MUSIC	COSTUMES	SET/PROPS	LIGHTING	OTHER ELEMENTS	DANCERS
<i>Ti symera, ti avrio, ti tora</i> [Today, tomorrow, now]	Konstantinos Rigos, Valia Papachristou	29/5/1992 Choreographic Competition “Rallou Manou”	Dimotiko Theatro ‘Agios Sostis’ [Municipal Theatre “Agios Sostis”]	Vassilis Tsitsanis	Konstantinos Rigos, Valia Papachristou				Konstantinos Rigos, Valia Papachristou
<i>Tha se do mesa sta xronia – O kipos</i> [See you through the years-The garden]	Konstantinos Rigos	19/6/1992	Roes Theatre - Athens	J.S.Bach, Keith Carradine, Shining Brass, The Pied Pipers	Konstantinos Rigos		Konstantinos Rigos		Lila Zafeiropoulou, Kiki Baka, Valia Papachristou, Konstantinos Rigos, Andonis Foniadakis
<i>Ta kommatia</i> [The Fragments]	Konstantinos Rigos	19/6/1992	Roes Theatre - Athens	Vassilis Tsitsanis, Manos Hatzidakis, Manos Vamvakaris	Konstantinos Rigos		Konstantinos Rigos		Georgia Giatrakou, Nikos Dragonas, Lila Zafeiropoulou, Katerina Kasioumi, Kiki Baka, Valia Papachristou, Lili Petridi, Konstantinos Rigos, Elena Topalidou, Andonis Foniadakis

APPENDIX 5

OKTANA DANCETHEATER CHOREOCRONICLE (1989-1995)

TITLE	CHOREO-GRAPHER	PREMIERE	THEATRE	MUSIC	COSTUMES	SET/PROPS	LIGHTING	OTHER ELEMENTS	DANCERS
<i>Oi Gamoi [Les Noces]</i>	Konstantinos Rigos Assistant: Antigoni Gyra	21/10/1993	Simeio Theatre	Igor Stravinsky	Kyriakos Katzourakis	Kyriakos Katzourakis	Nikos Diamandis		1 st cast: Tamara Iliasova, Elena Topalidou, Konstantinos Rigos, Amalia Bennett, Georgia Giatrakou, Roula Koutroumbeli, Didier Poujol 2 nd cast: Tamara Iliasova, Elena Topalidou, Konstantinos Rigos, Amalia Bennett, Georgia Giatrakou, Nikos Dragonas, Roula Koutroumbeli, Giorgos Matsakaris, Valia Papachristou, Marianna Tsartolia
<i>Fthinoporo 44 [Autumn no 44]</i>	Konstantinos Rigos	7/4/1994	Theatro Kollegiou Athinon [Athens College Theatre]	Robert Schumann	Nikos Natsoulis		Alekos Giannaros, Philipos Koutsaftis	Video: Dimitris Giatzouzakis, Giorgos Lanthimos	Maro Grigoriou, Konstantinos Rigos

APPENDIX 5

OKTANA DANCETHEATER CHOREOCRONICLE (1989-1995)

TITLE	CHOREO-GRAPHER	PREMIERE	THEATRE	MUSIC	COSTUMES	SET/PROPS	LIGHTING	OTHER ELEMENTS	DANCERS
<i>Daphnis and Chloe</i>	Konstantinos Rigos	3/2/1995	Apotheke	Morris Ravel	Nikos Natsoulis	Andonis Daglidis	Panagiotis Manousis	Installation outside the theatre Lydia Venieri & Kimonas Skassis	Fotis Nikolaou, Roula Koutroubeli, Elena Topalidou, Maro Grigoriou, Giannis Giaples, Amalia Bennett, Horhe Perdikis-Varouxis
<i>Alkistis</i>	Konstantinos Rigos	14/4/1995	Megaro Mousikis Athinon [Athens Concert Hall]	Nikos Mamagakis (original commission) Song: Eleftheria Arvanitaki Musicians: Dimitris Patras (tselo) and Maria Mbilndea (harp)	Nikos Natsoulis	Nikos Natsoulis	Marina Mousikou		Valia Papachristou, Elena Topalidou, Christos Karatzolas

APPENDIX 6
EDAFOS COMPANY CHOREOCRONICLE (1987-1995)

TITLE	CHOREO-GRAPHER	PREMIERE	THEATRE	MUSIC	COSTUMES	SET/PROPS	LIGHTING	OTHER ELEMENTS	PERFORMERS
<i>To Vouno. To Adiavroxo</i> [<i>The Mountain. The Raincoat</i>]	Dimitris Papaioannou	October 1987	Elefthero Kentro Technon	Dimitris Karagiorgos		Zafos Xagoraris			Dimitris Papaioannou, Aggeliki Stellatou
<i>Domatio I & Domatio II</i> [<i>Room I & Room II</i>]	Dimitris Papaioannou	22/7/1988	Palaio Sapounipoieio Elefsinas			Dimitris Papaioannou	Emmanouil Koutsourelis		Dimitris Papaioannou, Aggeliki Stellatou, Stavros Zalmas, Vaggelis Papadakis, Nikos Dragonas
<i>To Teleftaio Tragoudi</i> [The Last Song]	Dimitris Papaioannou	31/5/1990	University of Patras	Richard Straus	Dimitris Papaioannou	Nikos Alexiou			Dimitris Papaioannou, Aggeliki Stellatou
<i>Ta Tragoudia</i> [The Songs]	Dimitris Papaioannou	17/4/1991	Ktirio Kallitechnon "Katalipsi"	Stelios Peristeris, Christoph Willibald Ritter von Gluck, Richard Strauss	Dimitris Papaioannou	Nikos Alexiou		Noises: Pavlos Avouris Song: Paul Zahariadis	Dimitris Papaioannou, Aggeliki Stellatou, Stavros Zalmas, Vaggelis Papadakis

APPENDIX 6
EDAFOS COMPANY CHOREOCRONICLE (1987-1995)

TITLE	CHOREO-GRAPHER	PREMIERE	THEATRE	MUSIC	COSTUMES	SET/PROPS	LIGHTING	OTHER ELEMENTS	PERFORMERS
<i>Ta Feggaria</i> [<i>The Moons</i>]	Dimitris Papaioannou	30/10/1992	Ktirio Kallitechnon “Katalipsi”	Giorgos Koumendakis, Héctor Berlioz, V. Bellini, G. Verdi	Dimitris Papaioannou	Dimitris Papaioannou		Noises: Katerina Tzedaki	Gitsa Karela, Aggeliki Stellatou, Stavroula Siamou, Tina Papanikolaou, Michalis Nalbandis, Nikos Dragonas, Tasos Alexiadis, Giannis Giaples, Stavros Zalmas, Michalis Lagouvardos, Grigoris Lagos, Takis Pouloupoulos
<i>Midia</i> [<i>Medea</i>]	Dimitris Papaioannou	28/9/1993	K.N.S Theatre, Anvers	Extracts from the operas <i>La Pirata</i> , <i>La Straniera</i> , <i>La Sonnambula</i> , <i>Norma</i> , <i>Beatrice Di Tendra</i> , <i>I Puritani</i> by Vincenzo Bellini	Dimitris Papaioannou	Nikos Alexiou	Vasso Laktaridou	Make up: Aggelos Mendis	Dimitris Papaioannou, Aggeliki Stellatou, Vaggelis Lagos, Elena Topalidou, Michalis Nalbandis

APPENDIX 6
EDAFOS COMPANY CHOREOCRONICLE (1987-1995)

TITLE	CHOREO-GRAPHER	PREMIERE	THEATRE	MUSIC	COSTUMES	SET/PROPS	LIGHTING	OTHER ELEMENTS	PERFORMERS
<i>H Ifigeneia kai to Gefyri tis Artas</i> [<i>Iphigenia and the Bridge of Arta</i>]	Dimitris Papaioannou	14/4/1995	Megaro Mousikis Athinon [Athens Concert Hall]	Giorgos Koumendakis	Dimitris Papaioannou	Dimitris Papaioannou	Marina Mousikou	Soprano: Tzeni Drivala Trumpet: Kostas Graves	Aggeliki Stellatou, Giannis Giaples, Fotis Nikolaou,
<i>Oresteia</i>	Dimitris Papaioannou	1/7/1995	Ancient Theatre Epidaurus	Yiannis Xenakis	Lily Pezanou	Lily Pezanou	Alekos Giannaros	Make up: Aggelos Mendis Barytone: Spyros Sakkas, Percussion: Sylvio Gualda,	Maro Grigoriou, Aggeliki Stellatou, Giannis Giaples, Elena Topalidou, Stavros Zalmas, Grigoris Lagos, Nikos Dragonas, Fotis Nikolaou, Olga Gerogiannaki, Valia Dimitraki, Pigi Dimitrakopoulou-Seirli, Elisavet Papakonstantinou, Mata Sakka and 28 climbers

APPENDIX 6
EDAFOS COMPANY CHOREOCRONICLE (1987-1995)

TITLE	CHOREO-GRAPHER	PREMIERE	THEATRE	MUSIC	COSTUMES	SET/PROPS	LIGHTING	OTHER ELEMENTS	PERFORMERS
<i>Enos Leptou Sigy [One Moment Of Silence]</i>	Dimitris Papaioannou		Ilectriko ergostasio DEI [Electric Factory]	Giorgos Koumendakis, Manos Hatzidakis	Lily Pezanou	Lily Pezanou	Alekos Giannaros	Soprano: Tzeni Drivala, Song: Andreas Karakostas, Doros Dimosthenous, Piano: Kostis Papadakis	Christos Aliferis, Giannis Giaples, Giannis Diamandopoulos, Nikos Dragonas, Andonis Koutroubis, Giorgos Kardakos, Grigoris Lagos, Aggelos Mendis, Giorgos Matskaris, Vassilis Mitsiou, Dimitris Bakalis, Fotis Nikolaou, Alexandros Niagos, Stefanos Nikolaidis, Michalis Papadopoulos, Dimitris Papaioannou, Tassos Papaioannou, Michalis Papandonakis, Thanasis Solomos, Dimitris Sotiriou, Tina Papanikolaou, Aggeliki Stellatou, Zouzou Nikoloudi

APPENDIX 7

Greek quotations included in the thesis

Chapter 1

p. 14

There is controversy about the period, for some dance critics then, hold an optimistic stance: “the unquestionable booming of modern dance in Greece” [

μ μ] (Vounelaki, 1996a).

Others, in retrospect, are skeptical about that very notion of dance boom: “Is dance actually thriving? What had changed in dance that can be justified with this term?” [μ ;

μ μ

;] (Hassiotis, 2001b [online]).

p. 39

In the preface to the second edition of the book Identities and Gender in Modern Greece, the Greek anthropologist Efthimis Papataxiarchis notes:

this book indicates a shift from “general anthropology” to “particular anthropology”...a new strategy that approaches the general as incomplete, heterogeneous, often contradictory...

[μ μ «
» μ « μ »...μ
, ,
...]

Papataxiarchis, 1998 [1992]: 7–8

APPENDIX 7

Greek quotations included in the thesis

Chapter 2

p. 65

On one hand, Sikelianos was accused of idealism, nationalism, and formalism by the left intelligentsia (Georgousopoulos in Pratsika, 1991: 125), and on the other, many felt that the “experiment was extremely intellectual...and full of aesthetic sensation” [μ μ ... μ] (Miliadis, 1998 (no date): 97).

p. 67

Pratsika found in Dalcroze’s educational system the “essence of Greek education: rhythm, dance, music” [... , μ , μ] (Pratsika, 1991: 15). According to Pratsika, this unified approach had great significance for the human being, because “rhythm is taught as a means to unite body and mind” [μ μ , μ μ] and this body-mind cultivation is philosophically and aesthetically based on Greek values of beauty and humanism (Pratsika, 1991: 15).

p. 68-69

Eurhythmics is, still, a compulsory subject for all professional dance schools, while choreographic composition is a non-compulsory subject. The rationale is expressed by Pratsika’s student and choreographer, Zouzou Nikoloudi, who argues that:

APPENDIX 7

Greek quotations included in the thesis

eurhythmics, with its four constitutive fields of study: time-space-dynamics-form, cultivates the musical sensibility [of the student], but most importantly, it can provide the basics for choreographic composition.

[μ μ -
- μ - μ , μ ,
].

Nikoloudi, 1992: 14

p. 72

Indicative of the power of such attitudes towards dance are the remarks of dance anthropologist Irene Loutzaki, who in the early 1990s argued regarding children's dance education:

[Parents] usually think of dance as a kind of knowledge, especially for the girls, which along with the knowledge of music (piano) and the knowledge of foreign languages can shape girls' bodies and cultivate their personalities. But be careful! This knowledge will become problematic if the girl starts thinking of it as a professional means.

[
μ , μ μ
μ μ μ
μ μ
μ].

Loutzaki, 1992b: 39

p. 74

Manou, following Pratsika's example, gathered around her company and school "the most important, the most creative painters, poets, and composers ...that are key personalities of the intellectual life'.,," [,

, μ ,

μ] as the Nobel-awarded poet Odysseas Elytis wrote in 1956 (cited in Fessa-Emmanouel, 2004: 270).

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Greek quotations included in the thesis

p. 75

In addition, Manou found in Graham's technique "a system of moving based on esoteric intensity, disciplined freedom and anguished dynamics" [, , μ , μ] (Stamatopoulou-Vassilakou, no date: 56), which could help her to present choreographies reviewed as "full of expressiveness...simplicity and dignity" (Cohen, 1965: 57).

p. 77

As art historian Anna Kafetsi posits in her examination of Greek visual art, "the myth of Hellenism in art was the optimistic and hypocritical face of the [politically and economically] dependent upper class, who concealed the deficiency of freedom within the homogenised processes of capitalism" [μ , μ μ] (Kafetsi cited in Matthiopoulos, 2003: 472).

p. 79

George Fteris, a journalist, literary and theatre critic, in his introduction to the first Greek book of ballet history published in 1957, argued that "the body, even the most sensual and feminine, through its plasticity becomes ethereal, its materiality vanishes" [μ , , μ

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Greek quotations included in the thesis

μ
] (Fteris, 1957: 8).

p.81

The Colonels' Prime Minister, Georgios Papadopoulos, referred to Greece as a
“patient needing surgery...who has to be tighten on the bed for the purposes of the
surgery” [μ , μ
 ,

...] (anon, 1967 [online]),

and therefore his government had to ‘immobilize’ the country, which literary
meant repression, restraint, exclusion and imprisonment.

p. 82

Dancer and choreographer Maria Alvanou argued that “You have to make dance
your way of life. You have to take classes all day long, to think about dance all
the time. You are not allowed to go out, to drink, to eat, or to have a personal life”

[. μ μ ,
 . μ ,
 , , . μ] (Alvanou cited
in Bioubi, 1983 [online]: 11).

p. 86

According to this rhetoric, Greek (female) physicality was considered
problematic: “Ballet needs a special body type. We do not have these ideal bodies,

Greek quotations included in the thesis

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Greek quotations included in the thesis

μ ... μ μ ; μ μ μ ,
μ μ].

Tsatsou, 1991: 106

p. 89

She further suggests that “dance, like every other art is an honest effort to give form to truth, to meaning, to an experience, or to a situation” [

μ μ μ μ
, μ , μ μ , μ] (Tsatsou, 1991: 106).

p. 91

She [Denny Efthymiou-Tsekoura] argued that artistic experiences in early childhood can offer people extremely valuable sensibilities which “can ‘tune’ their senses forever” [μ], make them “capable of experiencing the multilayered beauty of this world.

It’s a revolution of life itself” [μ
μ ,

] (Efthymiou-Tsekoura, 1994: 312).

p. 91-92

Efthymiou-Tsekoura also referred to a major contradiction of the situation regarding dance in the country:

In this world of technology and progress the body is progressively less active in our everyday life, at the same time so many people are involved in bodily activities. In every corner of Athens there is a dance school, a gym or a sport center.

APPENDIX 7

Greek quotations included in the thesis

[... ,
...
...
...
...].

Efthymiou-Tsekoura, 1994: 31

p. 92

For example, Aggeliki Stellatou, co-founder of Edafos Company argued:

Dance, and the company was the place I wanted to be. We wanted to present our work. It was a deep need, which made me feel good... It was the situation that I wanted to be, because I felt better than anywhere else.

[...
...
...
...
...].

Stellatou, 2010 [non-print]

p. 100-101

Regarding the three companies examined in Chapters 4 to 6, the idea of ‘hellenic’ dance is relevant to discourses of Europeanisation and cultural policy and refers to notions of originality and authenticity as markers of difference within a global context.

Greek culture is the only or the greatest, I could say, means of defence and attack for the survival of Hellenism... Within the palimpsest of Greek Culture through the centuries, the art of dance has a prominent place...[For] dance is connected to the origins of mankind, the roots of Greek art...ancient drama, rhythm, harmony...

[...
...
...
...
...].

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... , μ , μ μ ...]

Foteas, 1992: 7–8

p. 102

Other authors, however, argue for a different perspective. Social anthropologist Marika Rombou-Levidi advocated in 1992 that a problem of contemporary dance in the country was its lack of a “distinctive Greek language, relevant to the characteristics of our culture...and having its own recognizable identity” [

μ , μ
μ μ ... μ ,

] (Rombou-Levidi, 1992: 44). Choreographer Eleftheria Kouroupi, similarly argued for the lack of a recognisable (Greek) identity in dance, and went on to add that the aim of such an identity would be to present “authentic and original creations, having international standards and capable of exposing continuity in time” [μ

] (Kouroupi, 1995: 319).

Chapter 3

p. 107

By the middle of the 80s, this climate came to a transitional point. According to Voulgaris:

the mid-80s was a pivotal period for the ideological climate of the Greek society. It is no coincidence that it, then, began the discussion about the ‘end of metapolitefsi’ [end of the political changeover]. At the same time, a substantial change in attitudes and behaviour was evident. The hegemony of traditional left culture came to an end and the stereotypes [of class politics] lost their power. Instead, it was

APPENDIX 7

Greek quotations included in the thesis

replaced by a sense of realistic liberalism and narcissistic consumerism.

[μ , μ '80 μ
μ
μ , μ μ μ
μ . μ μ
μ μ . μ μ
μ μ μ].

Voulgaris, 2002: 281

p. 109-110

Constantinos Tsoukalas, an important exponent of this approach, pays attention to the “normative, even expected and inevitable dependence of the peripheral social formations” [μ , , μ

μ μ] (Tsoukalas, 1981: 39) to the Western centres of power, arguing for a typical form through which peripheral countries are incorporated into the global capitalist market (Tsoukalas, 1981).

p. 114-115

It is definitely the need of a generation to express itself through the body beyond the codes of the past, but at the same time, the need to re-examine, in contemporary terms, the relation between audience and creator.

[μ μ μ
μ , μ μ
μ μ μ].

Papaioannou cited in Vounelaki, 1998: z4

Postmodern conditions can eliminate the political individual...because they erase the body-politic, the lived body of political action...

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p 123

The revision of the Greek Constitution in 1975 highlighted the interest of the state in the issue of cultural development. It was declared that “art and science, research and teaching shall be free and their development and promotion shall be an obligation of the State” [

μ ,

]

(article 16 cited in Konsola, 2006: 222).

p. 124

The philosophy behind the organisation of the Ministry was based on the French model and hence the cultural institution that it created “was extremely centralised and bureaucratic” [

μ

μ

]

(Konsola, 2006: 178).

p. 131

For Mikroutsikos:

National policy for culture means the creation of a general rationale for this domain. [It means] the syntax of a philosophy and a set of principles. Consequently, actions can be taken without the fear of being short-term or fragmented. By the term national policy I mean a general, contemporary, non-fragmentary policy, with hierarchies which will have effects on a national scale.

[

μ μ μ μ μ

μ μ μ . μ

μ

μ μ .

μ μ μ μ .

μ , μ , μ μ ,

μ , μ μ .

APPENDIX 7

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Mikroutsikos cited in Varopoulou, 1994: 28

Commenting on the means and limits of state intervention in culture, Mikroutsikos delineates the parameters of the state's action in relation to the need to counterbalance infrastructural deficits: "[The State will interfere] as much as it is necessary to confront the lack of structure and cultural institutions". [(
μ) μ
μ μ]. (Mikroutsikos cited in Varopoulou, 1994: 28).

p. 134

Dance critic Andreas Rikakis, in an overview of the year 1995, wrote:

The 1995-1996 season has been recorded in the history of theatrical Greek dance as the period when the rt of Terpsichore has received, for the first time, the biggest possible support from the state – ethically, economically and culturally – while at the same time [it received] a major...attack from the majority of the dance world.
[1995-1996 ,
– , μ
μ – μ μ
μ μ].

Rikakis, 1996: 302

p. 135

Venizelos stated: "What creates the strongest impression and is the great advantage of our country, in terms of development and ideological symbolism, is cultural heritage" [μ ,
μ μ ,

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, μ] (Venizelos, 1997: 31). According to Venizelos, “the responsibility of the state is, primarily, the protection of the cultural heritage” [

μ μ

μ] and he criticised previous political decisions, pointing out that “the role of the Ministry of Culture is not the role of a Ministry for the Arts”[

μ

. μ μ

μ] (Loverdou, 1998 [online]: z6-z7).

p. 138

In the early 1990s, the dance field in Greece was “a landscape of discontinuity, so characteristic of the history of dance in Greece” [μ

] (Vounelaki, 1996a:

57). However, the field started to expand, become enriched and gain momentum, and it was argued that “during the last decade we are witnessing an awaking of dance as theatre art, which is without historical precedent in the country” [

μ μ

μ] (Vounelaki, 1996a [online]: 47).

p. 138

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A need for openness to the world, communication and information among the artists was very vividly expressed in the early 1990s. For example, choreographer Apostolia Papadamaki posited:

Today, my dance generation tries to overcome the obstacle of being in Greece. To overcome the problem of being isolated from Europe and the USA...I hope that the next generations do not have the problems we are facing. I hope information and communication will be easy for them.

[μ ,
μ μ μ , μ μ
μ ... μ μ μ
μ μ].

Papadamaki in Hatzopoulos, 1998 [non-print]

p. 143

According to the President of the Jury, Dora Tsatsou, this dance competition aimed at “creating the conditions and giving the motivation to young artists to experiment. This is the only way to find new talents” [μ
μ
· μ
] (in Vounelaki, 1989c: 18–19).

Chapter 4

p. 154-155

Papadamaki, referring to their experience of city life, stressed:

We were ‘thirsty’. [In Athens] we were going to the movies, to concerts, exhibitions, took classes with Greek dancers just coming back from New York, even with Steve Paxton when he came to Athens, after an invitation by the choreographer/improviser Anastasia Lyra.

APPENDIX 7

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[μ . μ μ , , μ μ μ μ
Steve Paxton μ , μ μ
].

Papadamaki, 2007 [non-print]

p. 157

These well-known teachers introduced them to release techniques, Alexander, yoga, aikido and improvisation, enriching their movement knowledge and sensibility. In New York, they “lived together and dreamed together” [μ ,] (Kallinikidou cited in Pyrgioti, 1996: 65), something they continued to do upon their return to Greece in 1995.

The global leaps from Northern Greece to Athens, and then to metropolitan New York and back, helped them to create an image of the company as open, fluid, and “cosmopolitan in character” [μ] (Pyrgioti, 1995: 65).

p. 158

The company continues its experimentation, relying “on its collectivity and cooperation between its members, collaborators and friends” [’

SineQuaNon μ

() μ ,] (SineQuaNon, 2008 [online]).

p. 160

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We saw these fresh, cheerful, talented young ladies imagining innovative variations [on the theme of a bathtub] and they took us by surprise: risky music selections, unexpected [movement] combinations, cosmopolitan style and ... [a sense] that this new generation has made great leaps of improvement. It has assimilated influences from abroad and the country, without letting the shadow of the 'motherland' form a burden on the challenges of contemporary reality.

Hassiotis, 1995a: 28

p. 165

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This condition of physicality, as opposed to movement conventions and restrictions that come gradually as a person enters processes of socialisation and bodily cultivation, seems to be inherent in the argument of Papadamaki:

I am really thrilled when seeing dancers on stage taking risks. For me, transgressing the physical and psychological limits is very exciting and this is what I am trying to do in my choreography. I want the audience to remember that when they were children they used to run and climb on walls.

[, μ μ .
 , μ
].

Papadamaki cited in Vounelaki, 1995a: 20

p. 166

According to Papadamaki, “the choreography explores different dynamics and plays with energy – soft, strong, slow, fast, up and down, coming and going” [μ – – , – -, , ,] (Papadamaki cited in Pyrgioti, 1996: 65), evident in the work in changes of dynamics, different levels of movement (jumps, rolls on the floor, lifts) and in a fluctuating sense of movement in space which unfolds forwards and returns back (as in the beginning and ending of the work at the back wall).

The movement material was generated during the creative process in the studio through improvisational structures. “[On stage] it was not improvisational, but the movement material was generated by the dancers in the studio” [μ]

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recalled Kallinikidou (Kallinikidou, 2008 [non-print]), unlike later works of the company which included improvisational sections in the final work.

p. 166-167

Journalists have commented on the stage image of the company as being close to everyday people, and thus suggesting a connection between stage and street: “The dancers could be [people] walking amongst us, in the streets, on the city’s subway, at friends’ houses or rave parties” [μ μ , μ , μ] (Pyrgioti, 1996: 65).

p. 167

Papadamaki pointed out that “My work has hints from release techniques, physical theatre, visual elements, but also, what I now recognize, as a human resonance. It is this element which transcends choreography and appears as “real but it is not” [μ physical theatre, μ , μ] (Papadamaki, 2007 [non-print]).

p. 167-168

The physicality and intensity of movement used by the company in their early works, was conceived by Hassiotis as “a formalism that has not yet been disengaged from a desire for adornment” [μ

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μ μ μ μ μ μ
μ] (Hassiotis, 1997: 49), suggesting that the company exhibit physical tasks for the sake of making an impression, in a manner not justified by the work itself.

p. 168

The crisis was caused by a deadlock between “an interesting movement vocabulary, and the best dancers we have” and the inability of this combination “to be fertile and to transcribe itself into emotion” [

, μ μ μ
μ μ μ ;]
(Vounelaki, 2002: 12).

p. 168

The same attitude was expressed by Eleftheria Kouroupi, choreographer and member of the Advisory Board for Dance of the Ministry of Culture who, in the personal interview for this research stated that: “I can understand what they are doing, but they cannot represent me” [μ
μ] (Kouroupi, 2007 [non-print]).

p. 169

For Dimitriadi-Psaropoulou then, SineQuaNon was an exceptional case, which, in addition, could attain on stage “vividness and momentum” [μ
] while at same time “spreading the message that dance

APPENDIX 7

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for dance's sake is also dance for joy and for the beauty of life" [

μ μ : , μ] (Dimitriadi-Psaropoulou, 1995b: 47).

p. 170

Hassiotis pointed out that the precision of the dancers managed to create a "sense of optimism for the future of dance in the country" [μ μ μ μ ,] (Hassiotis, 1995b: 31).

p. 170

Moreover, Papadamaki made an interesting link between mobility and immobility in dance and the country's position within an international context: "Movement cannot exist without immobility. Was it necessary though, for Greece to live in immobility and isolation for so long in order finally to feel the breath of dancing at the end of 20th century?" [μ μ μ μ μ 20 ;] (Papadamaki, 1992: 109).

p. 174

This recurring movement motif of circular running explores corporeal energy and spatial ideas that register with the viewer and create an impact which critics have described as a "wild, direct, and stressful" [, μ] (Rikakis, 1995b: 14). For other reviewers, this energy "brings us to a contemporary world;

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it is the hysteria of time moving in circles” [

μ .] (Pyrgioti, 1995: 65).

p. 177

Baka argued, “We were not mere movers. We wanted to generate a feeling” [

μ movers. μ μ]. However, she sharply distinguished between an approach to movement as a means of expression or a vehicle of emotion and an approach, which sees movement “in surgical terms” [μ μ] generated from within the body, which, however, can evoke emotion, even though, not in an overtly direct way (Baka, in Sotiriou & Baka, 2007 [non-print]).

p. 178

These conditions led dance artists such as SineQuaNon to search for a different kind of familiarity with their bodies while, at the same time, they often expressed their need to explore movement as such. According to them, dance in Greece was mainly oriented towards dance theatre:

[SineQuaNon] do not understand why movement is so much neglected in the works by Greek choreographers. They do not hesitate to critique the performance *Tragic heroines inspire contemporary Greek choreographers*, presented at the Athens Music Hall, for having visual arts, music, ideas, but not dance!

[

μ , — , μ , —
!]

Vounelaki, 1995a: 20

APPENDIX 7

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p. 180

Instead, SineQuaNon proposed “dance productions based on movement”

[

], especially those movement techniques which are “based on

human anatomy and physiology” [

μ] (SineQuaNon, 2008 [online]).

p. 180-181

According to Anna-Sofia Kallinikidou, this need for novelty comes from the fact that “in Greece there was no dance development. There was a gap...rigidity.

Dancing matters were not evolving” [

μ . μ μ

μ] (Kallinikidou, 2008 [non-print]). In addition, she clarifies that,

according to their view, the problem with the choreographies then made in Greece

was their ‘descriptive and naïve character” [

(Kallinikidou, 2008 [non-print]).

p. 182

SineQuaNon proposed embodiment as a “form of body consciousness which can

affect your body intelligence in dance and in your life” [

μ μ]

(Sfika, 2008 [non-print]). Such movement consciousness is inwardly directed,

easy-going and resists exhibitionism. Sfika commented that:

Usually in a dance class you have to sweat. You have to try hard.
Energy levels are like a cardiogram. In New York we learned that it is

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not necessary to sweat, but it is necessary to become conscious of your body and its movements.

[
μ μ
μ . μ μ
],

Sfika, 2008 [non-print]

p. 183

However, this may also have imposed restrictions on body behaviours and movements, as Baka observed:

I never did what I really wanted to do. It was always a compromise, for everybody has to be part of it [the movement material]...I always think, even now, there is something that I haven't danced yet: [That is the dance] I really want.

[
μ μ μ μ .
μ μ μ μ .
μ].

Baka in Sotiriou and Baka, 2007 [non-print]

p. 183-184

Kallinikidou spoke about the interdependencies and influences within the members of the company:

Some of us were more physical and toward movement than others. But we could balance this, because we were sharing everything. However, for example, Papadamaki, who was not dancing so much, allowed Kiki [Baka], the more physical of us, to provide movement material. For that reason the work had a specific style. It was of a particular kind.

[
μ μ μ μ μ .
μ μ .
μ μ].

Kallinikidou, 2008 [non-print]

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p. 184

Even though Papadamaki held the position of choreographer in the majority of the company's works until 2002, "she did not dance. She has decided her role" [.]. (Kallinikidou, 2007 [non-print]).

p. 185

In terms of institutional resources, as the local network of venues, festivals and organisers was not able to support the nurturing of young artists in the age of Europeanisation, their need to belong to the international scene, to "exit from the ghetto" [] (Vounelaki, 1996b: 53) and to gain recognition in such a context had to be achieved through alternative structures. SineQuaNon artists argued that: "What is important for us is the openness to the dancing world... We really need comparing [ourselves to others] in order to find our own identity and [we have] to fight vanity and fear" [μ μ μ ... μ μ , μ μ ,] (Baka cited in Vounelaki, 1996 b: 53).

Chapter 5

p. 191

In addition to his artistic practice, Rigos has also expressed verbally and in public his positioning in relation to Greek and international dance history. In particular, referring to the personalities of Greece's modern dance history, like Pratsika and Manou (see Chapter 2), Rigos pointed out their important contribution "in

Greek quotations included in the thesis

μ , μ], a practice which, according to his view, can also be interpreted as “a reaction to their own social origins, to their own upper class [status]” [μ μ , μ]. However, Rigos suggested that these personalities were trying to ignore the ideological underpinning of their practices, which is against his own viewpoint:

Rigos in Hatzopoulos, 1998 [non-print]

Rigos in Hatzopoulos, 1998 [non-print]

Greek quotations included in the thesis

Personal friendship among its members was the initial creative impetus of Oktana Dancetheatre. Unlike SineQuaNon, however, (see chapter 4) Oktana Dancetheatre was strongly centred on its choreographer's vision and personality, and Rigos's need to "explore and communicate with [him]self" [

The work was based on a simple “action-reaction principle” [-] (Papachristou, 2008 [non-print]), exemplified in throwing, catching, and falling with a suitcase.

Nina Alkalay explains in her study of the State School of Dance that in the 1990s, “the aim of the Director Deny Efthymiou was the improvement of the technical level of the dancers” [100],

In contrast to his previous works, “Kostas [Konstantinos Rigos] started to have inclination towards more technical dancers, as a result of his experiences in the

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State School of Dance” [] (Aroni, 2008 [non-print]).

p. 198-199

Dancer Elena Topalidou, referring to the production of *Daphnis and Chloe*, remembered, “I and Roula [Koutroubeli] were taking ballet classes every day. Some others, like Fotis [Nikolaou] were still students at the State School of Dance, and thus they had a full technical training every day” [

μ] (Topalidou, 2010 [non-print]). The result was obvious on stage, as critics wrote about the performers “All of them were technically brilliant, having also great sensitivity in the expressive parts of their roles” [, μ] (Hassioti, 1995c: 30), or “the eight dancers of the company (five of whom are graduates from the State School of Dance) were spirited, energetic, technically overqualified and consistent with the mood of the choreography” [μ μ μ μ , μ (μ μ) μ , , μ] (Rikakis, 1995d: 14).

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p. 199

Rigos elaborated on how he conceived his movement language in an international context, set his own movement exploration at the crossroad of ballet and modern dance:

From the generation of the moderns I use the looseness and release [of the body], and from ballet I use stability and austerity. I want to incorporate both in what I am doing and to produce a new mixture.

[μ . μ μ , μ μ ,].

Rigos cited in Hatzopoulos, 1998 [non-print]

p. 203

The text was written in the first person, implying a confessional mode, and only at the end does it become clear that the text describes the narrative of the choreography, as it closes with a declaration for the audience:

This is what you are going to see, Ladies and Gentlemen, with or without the mask of your ageless innocence.

[μ].

Rigos in Oktana Dancetheatre (1995) [programme]

p. 210

Early in his career, Rigos argued that “a developing relationship of the audience with new dance” is important, but he went on to clarify that this effort should not treat dance “as commercial product but as a truthful expression” [μ

μ “ » μ ,

APPENDIX 7

Greek quotations included in the thesis

μ μ , μ] (Rigos, 1991: 44).

p. 220

This style of movement was selected deliberately as, according to the choreographer, “it fitted the subject matter” [μ] (Rigos, 2007 [non-print]), and as this analysis argues, it deploys a suitable language for the choreographer’s aim to explore a ballet on a Greek theme.

p. 223

Eleni Kefalou-Hors, a eurhythmics teacher and former student of Koula Pratsika, belonged to the older generation of dance practitioners and in an article in Choros [Dance] magazine, one month after the production of *Daphnis and Chloe*, without referring clearly to any specific work, argued:

Have you seen a performance that you will remember next year?
Some moments of these performances might be very impressive for
their provocative expressive means. But where is dance when there is
no decency?

[μ ; μ , μ μ ; μ μ ;]

Kefalou-Hors, 1995: 3

p. 225

The atmosphere of decline and decay is intensified by the small crops at the edges of the paintings, at the two rear corners and the sides of the room, as

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...).
...].

Dimitriadi-Psaropoulou, 1995a: 48

p. 229-230

Dancer, Giannis Giaples, remembered, “I felt uncomfortable jumping up and down” [... - ...] (Giaples, 2008 [non-print]),

while Elena Topalidou said that “I do not remember feeling uncomfortable being naked. I truly believed that Rigos was right to want us naked” [... μ μ

... . μ ... μ ... ,

] (Topalidou, 2010 [non-print]).

p. 231

Hassiotis described the scene “as a demonic dance, with a strong erotic character, which was not directed toward an aim, a person or a goal” [... μ

« ... μ » ... μ ... μ , ... μ , -

μ , ... μ ,

μ]. (Hassiotis, 1995a: 30) and for that reason, seemed illogical.

p. 232

The choreographer continued to, frequently, use nudity in his works until today.

I am very interested in the naked body as a structure, as an abstraction, the way it becomes provocative, its sexuality, all these things. I have no intention to scandalize and shock when I show a naked body on stage ... The naked body gives me the opportunity to exaggerate and make extreme something which would be, otherwise, too real.

[... μ μ : μ , ... , ... μ ... μ μ ... μ μ

APPENDIX 7

Greek quotations included in the thesis

‘
μ].

Rigos cited in Hassiotis, 2002

Chapter 6

p. 234

The space of untold desire is not always silent.

[μ μ].

Vounelaki, 1997a: 198

p. 240-241

The company’s works and artistic practice and its reception by critics, media and public turned a company of young artists whose work had “[artistic] virtues which

surpass a creation by young artists” [μ μ

μ] (Vounelaki, 1989a: 8) into the most prestigious and well-known dance company.

p. 241-242

In 1986, Papaioannou and Stellatou began a period of intense exploration within Edafos Company, as they both felt that existing dance companies could not satisfy their needs. Their aim was “to dance in a way that could talk to our hearts in an aesthetic form in accordance with our contemporary life” [μ μ

μ] (Papaioannou cited in Hatzopoulos, 1998 [non-print]). Stellatou suggested that the goal of their experimentation was “a whole way of moving that has to do with the sensation of the body from the inside out” [μ ,

APPENDIX 7

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μ μ μ μ μ]
(Stellatou cited in Pnevmatikou, 2005: 20), which is not dance in terms of
technical movements but “a theatrical praxis which uses movement” [
μ μ] (Papaioannou cited in
Vounelaki, 1989: 10).

p. 242

Stellatou pointed out that in Tsoutis’s company they came into contact with Erick
Hawkins’s technique, which was “tenderer to the body, than the techniques I was
taught in the dance school. We didn’t have to push ourselves for a technical
accomplishment, to push our bodies harder. It had to do with a quality of
movement and not its quantity” [μ μ
μ . μ μ
μ , .
μ] (Stellatou, 2010 [non-print]).

p. 243-244

In these works, Papaioannou refined his visual perspective and presented an
extremely elaborate movement-light image in comparison with previous works,
which was described as “visual poetry” [] (Kaggelary, 1991) and
“extreme beauty” [] (Rikakis, 1991b).

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p. 245

“Painting could not offer me a contemporary means of expression. Poor and young people seldom could come in contact with such art. Comics then, was something else...[
μ μ
μ ,
μ μ ...] (Papaioannou cited in Tsiligianni 2002 [non-print]).

p. 246

For Papaioannou, what was interesting on stage was the “coexistence of image, music, movement for a theatrical praxis, aiming at transferring intensity [to the audience] and proposing an ethical dimension of art. That is, the distance art should have from entertainment [
μ μ
μ , μ μ
μ μ
” (Papaioannou cited in Hatzopoulos, 1998 [non print]).

p. 246

On the contrary, the performance opens a space for dancers’ “bodies to sleepwalk” [
] (Papaioannou, 2010 [non-print]), while creating poetic and stimulating images which register with the viewer.

APPENDIX 7

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These bodily forms had to be filled with energy by the performer, to become what Papaioannou called a “condenser of energy” [] (Papaioannou, 2010 [non-print]).

p. 246

For the performers, it was a challenge to “fill a pose with energy and make an image moving in space. This was a procedure which did not involve slowness *in* time, but a slowness *of* time” [μ .
 . , μ μ
 , μ
] (Giaples, 2008 [non-print], emphasis in the original).

p. 247

For Papaioannou, the strategy of manipulating the inner time and energy of movement was also related to the notion of revelation, which involves the spectator. Papaioannou defined revelation as “the dimension [of consciousness] in which the spectator can enter if attendance at a performance manages to change his/her own fast rhythms” [.

μ] and he names this experiential condition “hedonistic endurance” [μ] (Papaioannou, 2011 [online]).

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Edafos Company's work was described as a theatrical experience of "a hybrid form in which movement and light created visual spectacles" [μ μ

μ μ μ] (Vounelaki, 1996b: 10).

Within this visual spectacle, according to theatre scholar and critic Deo Kaggelari:

"the movement of bodies in space and their relationship to space and time convey an authentic dramaturgy, while the minimal gestures deliver optimum energy and emotion" [μ μ μ

μ , μ μ μ

μ] (Kaggelari, 1991: 49).

p. 248

This combination of visual, formal and expressive elements is better exemplified in the way Papaioannou used images to convey meaning or to deploy a narrative on stage. "I have no other way of communicating a theme than through a combination of human feelings and images" [

μ μ , μ μ μ ,

μ] (Papaioannou

cited in Hassiotis, 1997 [online]).

p. 248

It was not unusual for Edafos Company to build the whole stage, scenery and props prior to the development of the choreography, which was conceived and created in relation to the design of that particular space and to the particular props

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(chairs, water, costumes). “What we had to offer was a way of moving [together] with the costume, [together] with the props” [μ μ , μ μ ...] argued the choreographer (Papaioannou cited in Hatzopoulos, 1998, [non-print]).

p. 249

This process involved a conception of movement as “not consisting of positions, or pauses but of energy directed outwards” μ] (Giaples, 2008 [non-print]).

p. 250

Papaioannou, commented on the significance of *Midia* [*Medea*] for the company, pointing out that “It signaled our transition from the alternative venue of Katalipsi with its 60 seats to the stage of National Theatre with 700 seats. There we performed five days, and it was sold out” [μ μ μ - μ 700 , μ μ - μ] (Papaioannou, no date [online]). Furthermore, he explained the popularity of the work, arguing that: “The work was emotionally accessible to everyone, but at the same time abstract... It was simple, elaborated and grandiose” [μ , ... μ μ] (Papaioannou, no date [online]).

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Dancer Photis Nikolaou suggested that *Midia* [*Medea*] had an emotional overload that was quite unusual for dance at the time (Nikolaou, 2008 [non-print]). It had an interesting balance between mime, drama and aestheticism. In addition, “it was all set on the water, which played with symbolism and the senses” [

μ μ] (Nikolaou, 2008 [non-print]).

p. 254

For the choreographer, this creation was “the most personal work so far, the performance which expresses myself totally and it is the most important thing I have done” [

μ , μ
μ , μ]

(Papaioannou in anon, 1995a). For some critics, Edafos Company presented a work of “naïve meanings and overt descriptions” [μ ,
,] (Kaltaki, 1995), which focused on a “performance of pure images and beauty” [μ
] (Kaggelari, 1995).

p. 255

Dance critic Clementine Vounelaki wrote:

Edafos Dance’s works have won our respect not only for their visual imagery and theatrical sculptures, which remind us of Caravaggio or Tsarouhis, but most importantly, for a sense of ritual. [A ritual] in which it invites us to delve through a brilliant combination of image, timing, energy and action...[However] changing the size of productions from small ‘hand-made’ pieces to large productions the

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choreographer's power to set the rhythm of the performance has been lost.

[μ μ μ μ μ
μ μ ,
μ , » - ... μ «
μ].

Vounelaki, 1995b: 34

p. 255

The problem with large-scale productions, according to Vounelaki, was the danger of the creator “succumbing to the spectacular and abolishing body memory” [μ μ ‘ ’,
μ μ μ] (Vounelaki, 1995b: 34).

p. 257

The music and song have a strong religious and dramatic character, which, according to the composer “creates a clear form, based on the internal rhythm of a mourning march and one tempo” [μ μ μ
μ μ . μ μ -
μ] (Koumendakis in Edafos Company (1995) [programme]), and expresses “an existential despair through harmonic restraint and a continuous melodic flow” (Leotsakos, no date [non-print]).

p. 263

The choreographer described the first part of the choreography as “a music storm, having a single image and a repetitive movement” while in the second part “a

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Papaioannou extended the issue of honesty to art's responsibility on social issues in general and clarified his own ethical stance:

It wouldn't be possible for me to talk about love between men without mentioning its plague. I know that this position which connects the disease of the century with homosexuality is not politically correct... it is not only a means for social messages and utilitarian purposes... Art has the right to scream for our personal agonies... What myself and my friends have experienced as AIDS is the decimation of homosexual men.

[...
...
'politically correct'...
...
... AIDS ...
...].

Papaioannou cited in Papanikolaou, 1995

p. 269

The central themes of death and love in *Enos Leptou Sigy* [*One Minute of Silence*] are woven around:

the exchange of bodily fluids which is the highest point of love...that is the last natural thing we have...a basic need of human kind...but I know this is forbidden.

[...
...
...[]].

Papaioannou cited in Papanikolaou, 1995

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In the second part of the choreography, water, wine and fruit juices were used on several occasions (pouring, eating, placing on the table and on bodies), provoking a reaction from one dance critic who referred to the scene as a “disgusting watermelon smearing” [μ] (Psaropoulou-Dimitriadou, 1995c: 42).

APPENDIX 8

VIDEO MATERIAL INCLUDED IN THE THESIS¹

1. EXCERPTS FROM *PROSOLOTOIXOS* [*TOUR DE FORCE*] - SINEQUANON²

Choreography: Apostolia Papadamaki (SineQuaNon)

Music: Hector Zazou, John Jurie, Michael Nyman, A. Balanescu

Performers: Kiki Baka, Anna-Sophia Kallinikidou, Fotis Nikolaou, Alexandros Karydis, Dimitris Sotiriou

2. EXCERPTS FROM *DAPHNIS AND CHLOE* - OKTANA DANCETHEATRE³

Choreography: Konstantinos Rigos

Music: Morris Ravel

Performers: Fotis Nikolaou, Roula Koutroubeli, Elena Topalidou, Maro Grigoriou, Giannis Giaples, Amalia Bennett, Horhe Perdikis-Varouxis

3. EXCERPTS FROM *ENOS LEPTOU SIGY* [*ONE MOMENT OF SILENCE*] – EDAFOS COMPANY⁴

Choreography: Dimitris Papaioannou (Edafos Company)

Music: Giorgos Koumendakis, Manos Hatzidakis

Performers: Christos Aliferis, Giannis Giaples, Giannis Diamandopoulos, Nikos Dragonas, Andonis Koutroubis, Giorgos Kardakos, Grigoris Lagos, Aggelos Mendis, Giorgos Matskaris, Vassilis Mitsiou, Dimitris Bakalis, Fotis Nikolaou, Alexandros Niagos, Stefanos Nikolaidis, Michalis Papadopoulos, Dimitris Papaioannou, Tassos Papaioannou, Michalis Papandonakis, Thanasis Solomos, Dimitris Sotiriou, Tina Papanikolaou, Aggeliki Stellatou, Zouzou Nikoloudi

Soprano: Mata Katsouli Song: Andreas Karakostas, Doros Dimosthenous,

Piano: Kostis Papadakis

Video direction: Dimitris Vernikos

¹ For details on the video material and the excerpts selected see footnote 5, p. 33

² For a complete list of the performance's credits see Appendix 4

³ For a complete list of the performance's credits see Appendix 5

⁴ For a complete list of the performance's credits see Appendix 6

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